

HUMBERTO RAMOS BRIAN AUGUSTYN SANDRA HOPE



OUT OF THIS WORLD



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CHAPTER SEVEN

LEFT BEHIND



IT'S NOT MUCH OF
A TOWN, REALLY.
NOWHERE NEAR AS
ATTRACTIVE AS
EL DORADO CITY.



IT'S A DIRTY LITTLE BACKWATER
WITH LONG OUTDATED BRAGGING
RIGHTS ON A NOW ANCIENT HIGH
SCHOOL FOOTBALL TEAM.

THIS DUMP, HOWEVER,
STILL EXISTS.

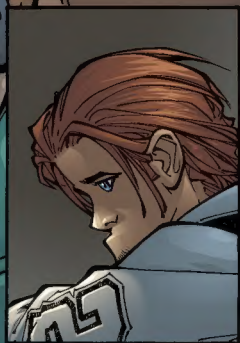
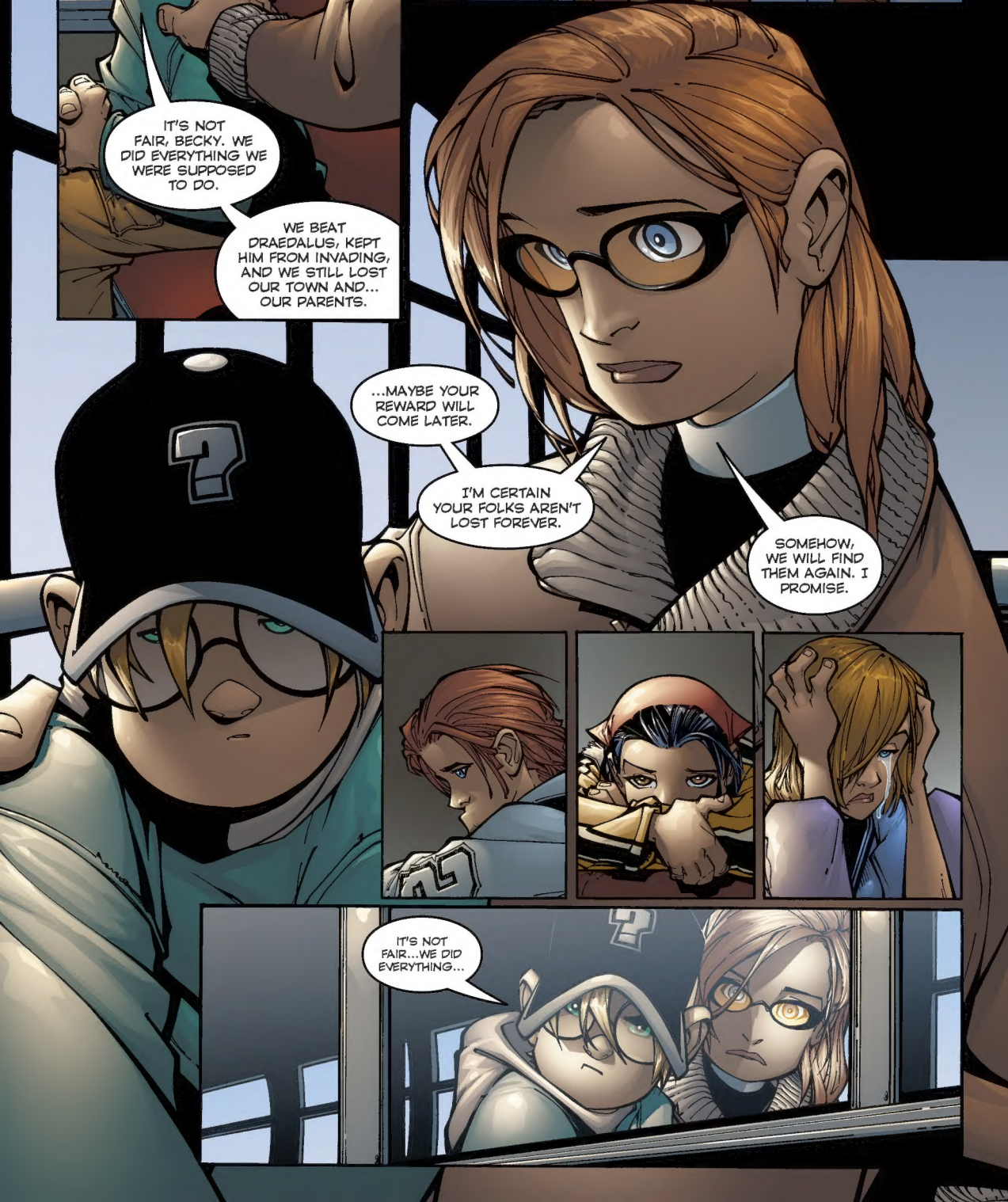
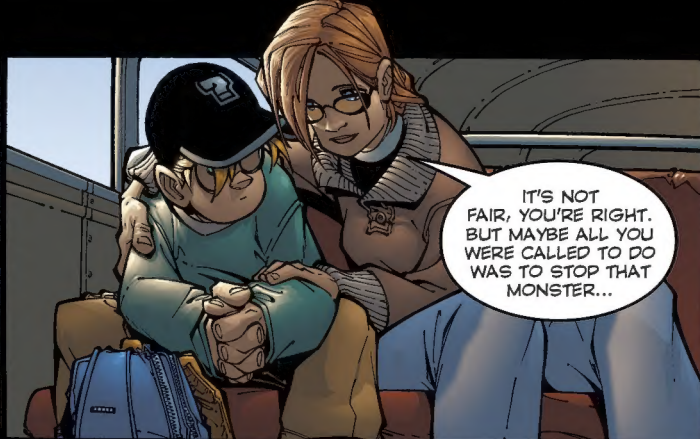
A DISTINCTION EL DORADO
CITY CAN NO LONGER CLAIM.

SIX PEOPLE ARE ALL THAT
REMAIN OF A FORMERLY
BUSTLING METROPOLIS...

...EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING
ELSE SEEMINGLY SWALLOWED
UP INTO ETERNITY...

...LEAVING THESE FOUR
DEVASTATED ORPHANS.

NOT FAIR.





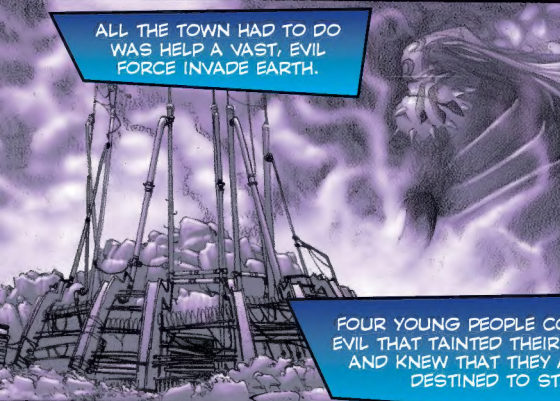
AN INTERDIMENSIONAL SORCERER
KNOWN AS DRAEDALUS SET HIS
SIGHTS ON DOMINATING THE
ENTIRE MULTIVERSE...

...CHOOSING EARTH AS HIS STEPPING
STONE--AND EL DORADO CITY AS
HIS ENTRY.

SEEKING TO ENTER UNNOTICED
AND UNOPPOSED, THE MYSTICAL
TYRANT MADE A DEAL WITH
THE TOWN LEADERS.



THEY SOLD THE CITY'S SOUL IN
EXCHANGE FOR PROSPERITY
AND PROTECTION.



ALL THE TOWN HAD TO DO
WAS HELP A VAST, EVIL
FORCE INVADE EARTH.



FOUR YOUNG PEOPLE COULD SEE THE
EVIL THAT TAINTED THEIR HOMETOWN--
AND KNEW THAT THEY ALONE WERE
DESTINED TO STOP IT.

THE PHANTOM CREATURES HAD
POWER OVER ALL OF HUMANITY
EXCEPT FOR THESE FOUR...



...WHO HAD POWER OF THEIR OWN
TO RESIST MYSTICAL ASSAULT.

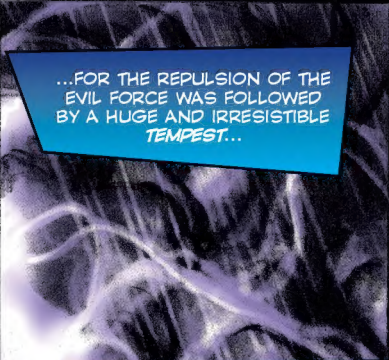


AND THUS WAS A HUGE AND
POWERFUL MYSTIC LEGION
COMPLETELY ROUTED...



...BY CHILDREN.

BUT MAGIC WASN'T
COMPLETELY BANISHED...



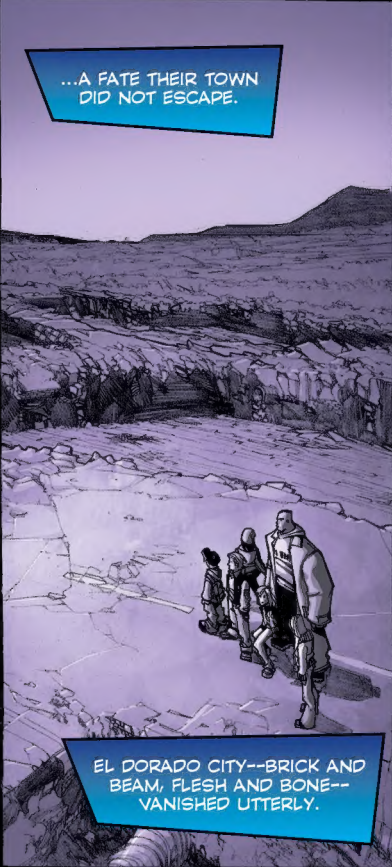
...FOR THE REPULSION OF THE
EVIL FORCE WAS FOLLOWED
BY A HUGE AND IRRESISTIBLE
TEMPEST...



...AS IF *NATURE* DECIDED TO SCOUR
AWAY EVERY REMAINING
VESTIGE OF THE TAIN.

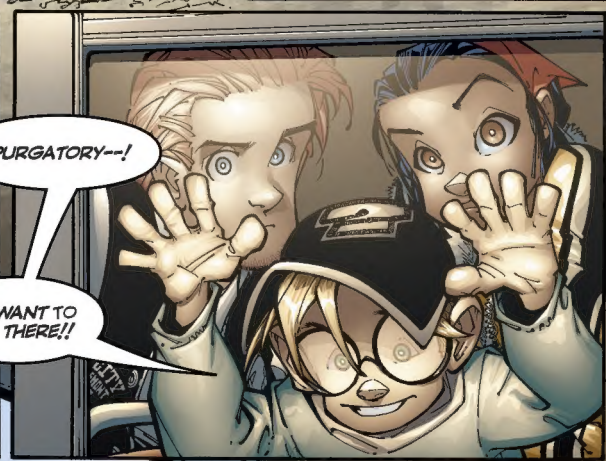
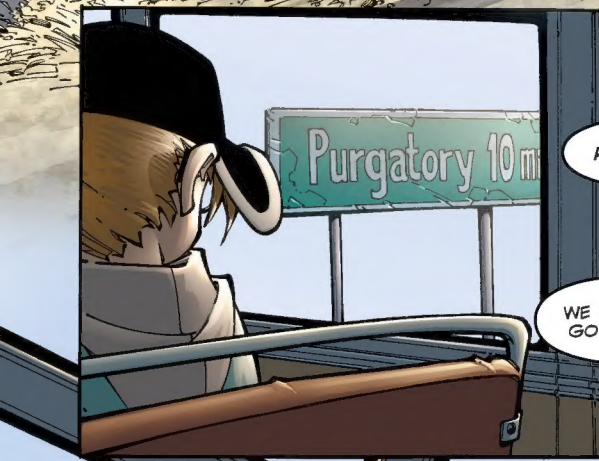


ONLY STRATEGIC INTERVENTION
SAVED THE TEENS FROM THE
RAVAGES OF THE STORM...



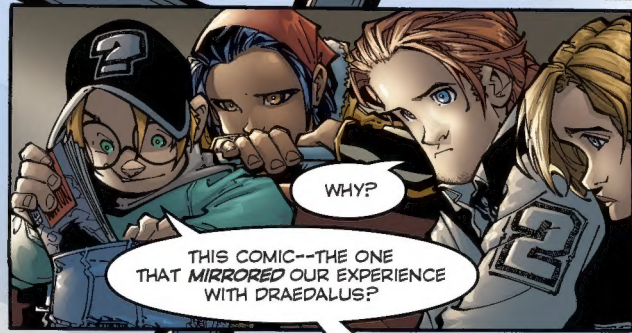
...A FATE THEIR TOWN
DID NOT ESCAPE.

EL DORADO CITY--BRICK AND
BEAM, FLESH AND BONE--
VANISHED UTTERLY.



PURGATORY---!

WE WANT TO GO THERE!!



WHY?

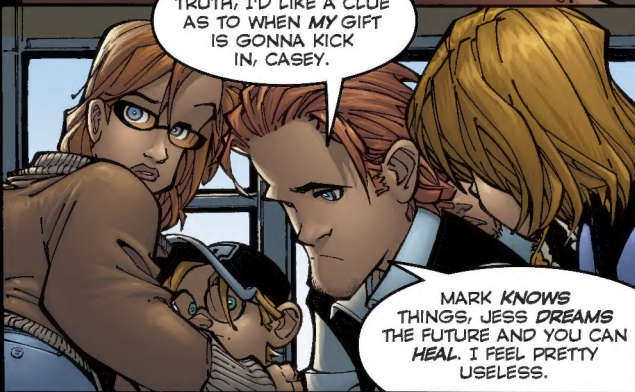
THIS COMIC--THE ONE THAT MIRRORED OUR EXPERIENCE WITH DRAEDALUS?

IT'S SET IN PURGATORY, NEVADA!



GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME.

SET A COURSE FOR PURGATORY, ABEL!



DAMN NATION

"THIS GUY'S THE
VILLAIN--MALEDORN."

"REMINDE YOU OF
ANYONE...?"

"DRAEDALUS--!"

IN THIS ISSUE:
AFTER A BOMBING
WITH EVIL!

"THOSE THINGS, THE
GOBLINS, SHOULD
BE FAMILIAR TOO."

"INSTEAD OF A MINE,
AS IN E-D CITY, MALEDORN
ENTERS THE WORLD THROUGH
AN ABANDONED WELL
IN THE DESERT..."

"THE COMIC STORY ENDS
IN A BLAST AS WELL."

"OF COURSE, IN THE
END, PURGATORY IS
STILL STANDING."

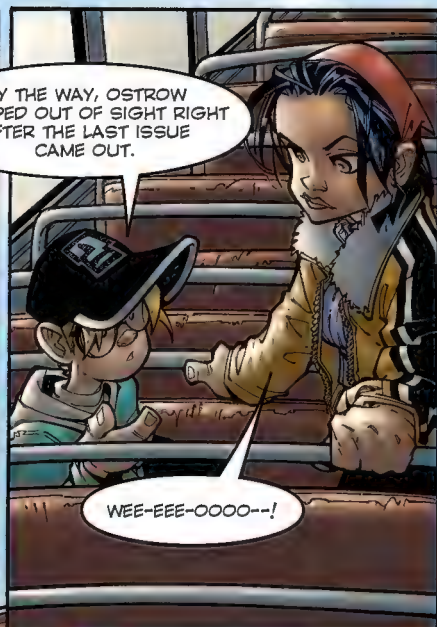
"GUESS TRUTH
IS STRANGER THAN
FICTION."

THE END?



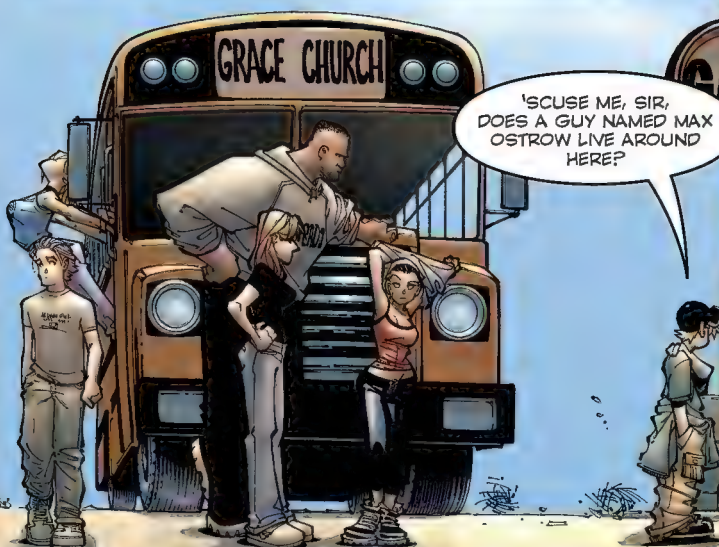
THAT'S JUST IT--I DON'T THINK *DAMN NATION* IS FICTION. I THINK THEY BEAT DRAEDALUS HERE TOO!

MAX OSTROW, THE GUY WHO WROTE AND DREW THE COMIC, FICTIONALIZED THE STORY A LITTLE IS ALL.



BY THE WAY, OSTROW DROPPED OUT OF SIGHT RIGHT AFTER THE LAST ISSUE CAME OUT.

WEE-EEE-OOOO--!



'SCUSE ME, SIR, DOES A GUY NAMED MAX OSTROW LIVE AROUND HERE?



NOT THAT I EVER HEARD OF. HARDLY *NOBODY* LIVES HEREABOUTS ANY MORE.

WHY'S THAT?



GOOD SENSE, I GUESS. ONLY SO MUCH *DUST* MOST FOLKS'LL PUT UP WITH.

THEY JUST MOVED ON IS ALL.



IS THERE ANYBODY STILL IN TOWN WHO SERVES FOOD?

GENERAL STORE YONDER HAS A LUNCH COUNTER.

THANK YOU. WILL YOU PLEASE SEE TO THE BUS WHILE WE GO REFUEL OURSELVES--?

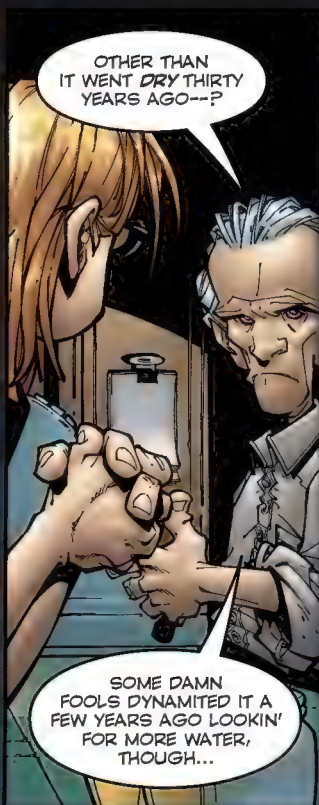


YOU
FOLKS PASSING
THROUGH...?

PROBABLY.
UNLESS YOU KNOW
WHERE WE MIGHT FIND
A GUY NAMED MAX
OSTROW...?

NEVER HEARD
OF 'IM.

AND YOU
HAVEN'T HAD A...
DISASTER AT AN
INDIAN WELL...?

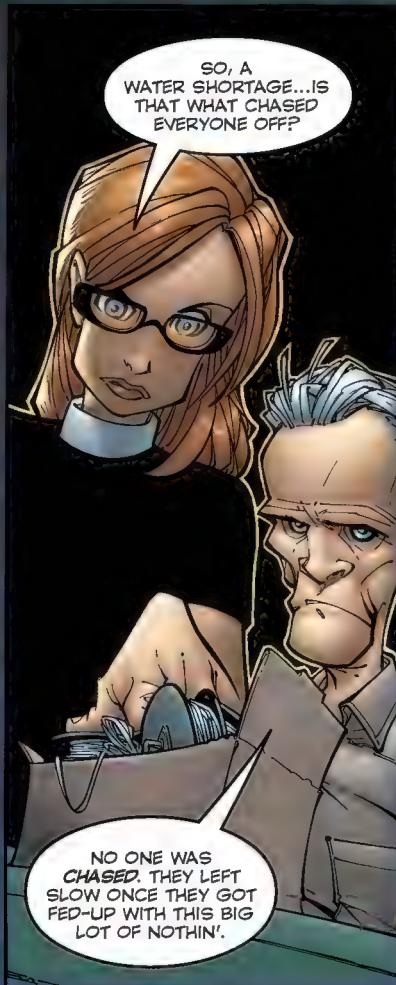


OTHER THAN
IT WENT *DRY* THIRTY
YEARS AGO---?

SOME DAMN
FOOLS DYNAMITED IT A
FEW YEARS AGO LOOKIN'
FOR MORE WATER,
THOUGH...

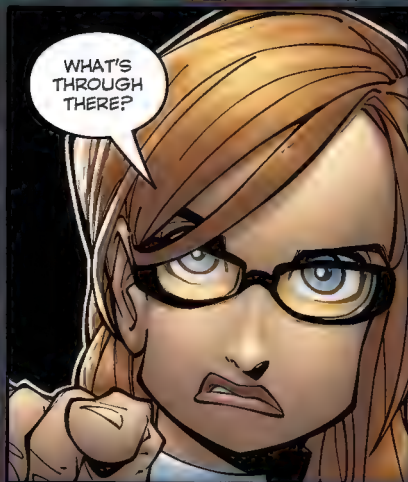


"...BLEW IT TO
SMITHEREENS--AND
ALL THEY FOUND WAS
MORE **DUST**."



SO, A
WATER SHORTAGE...IS
THAT WHAT CHASED
EVERYONE OFF?

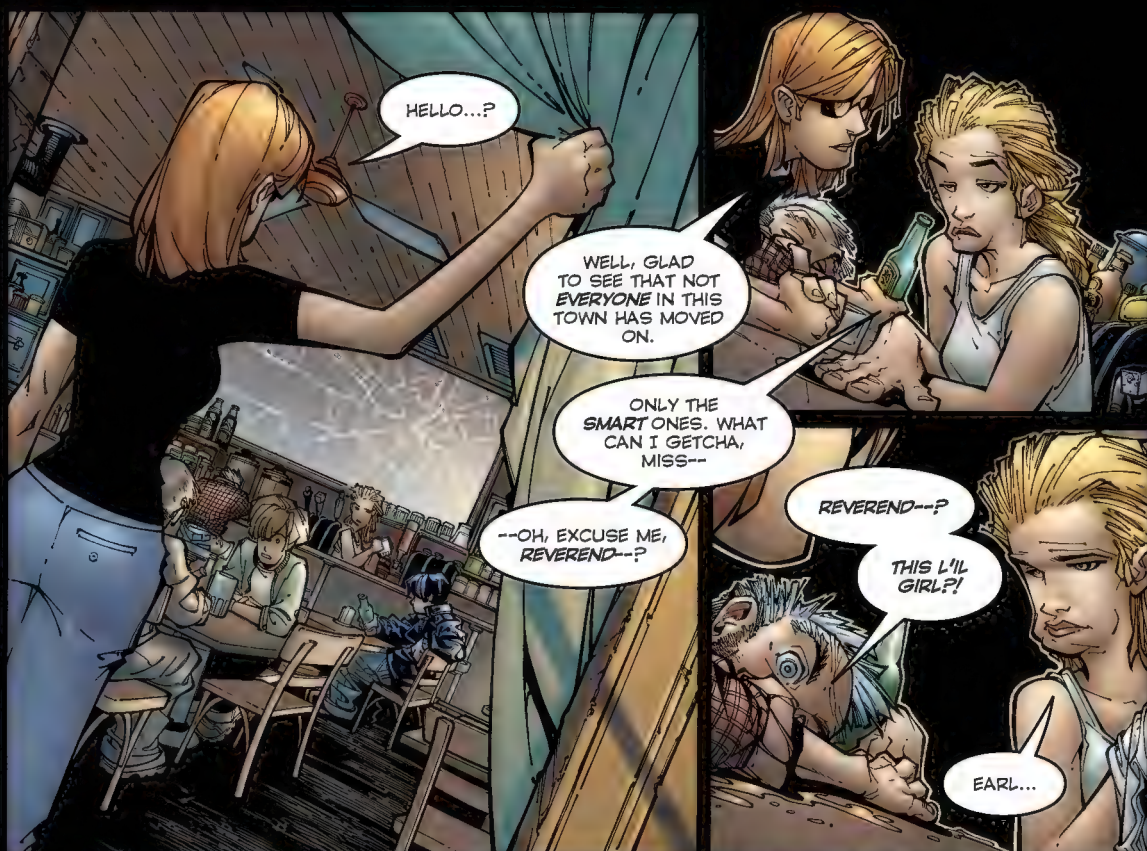
NO ONE WAS
CHASED. THEY LEFT
SLOW ONCE THEY GOT
FED-UP WITH THIS BIG
LOT OF NOTHIN'.



WHAT'S
THROUGH
THERE?



"SALOON. RUN BY
MY SISTER."



HELLO...?

WELL, GLAD TO SEE THAT NOT EVERYONE IN THIS TOWN HAS MOVED ON.

ONLY THE SMART ONES. WHAT CAN I GETCHA, MISS--

--OH, EXCUSE ME, REVEREND--?

REVEREND--?

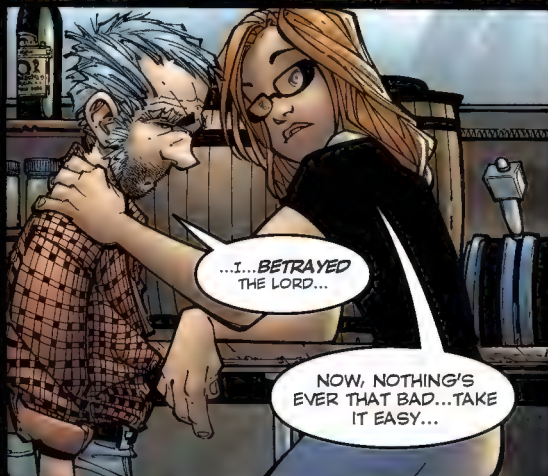
THIS L'IL GIRL?!

EARL...



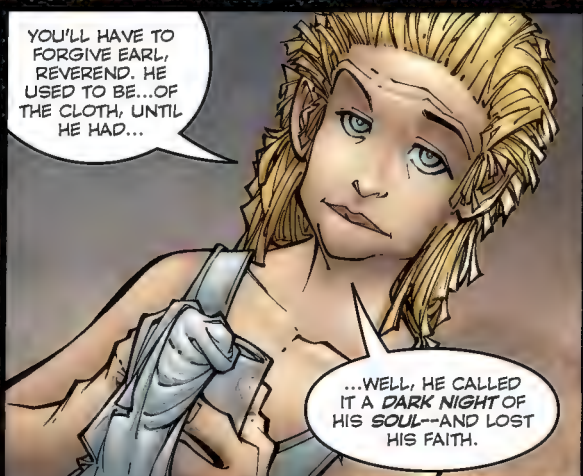
WOMEN AIN'T S'POSED TO BE PREACHERS--THAT'S A MAN'S JOB...! IT'S BLASPHEMY T' GOD'S WHAT IT IS!

I KNOW...I WAS CALLED TO PASTOR...TILL I...I...



...I... **BETRAYED** THE LORD...

NOW, NOTHING'S EVER THAT BAD...TAKE IT EASY...

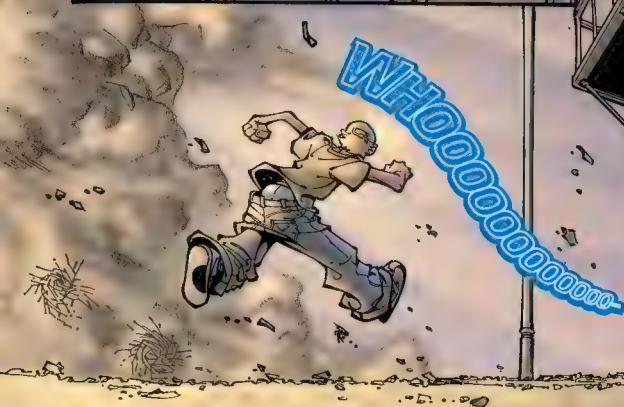


YOU'LL HAVE TO FORGIVE EARL, REVEREND. HE USED TO BE...OF THE CLOTH, UNTIL HE HAD...

...WELL, HE CALLED IT A **DARK NIGHT** OF HIS SOUL--AND LOST HIS FAITH.



IT'S PROBABLY
JUST MISPLACED.
IT'LL TURN UP.



HEY, DAVE,
EMMA--C'N I GET A
BIG LEMONADE, PLEASE?
WASH SOME OF THIS
DIRT AWAY...

BUS'S
READY WHEN YOU
FOLKS ARE, BY
TH' WAY.



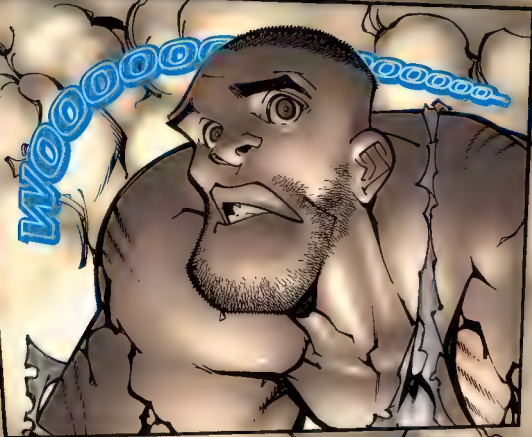
LOOKS LIKE
WE'RE GOING
TO HAVE A DOOZY
OF A STORM.

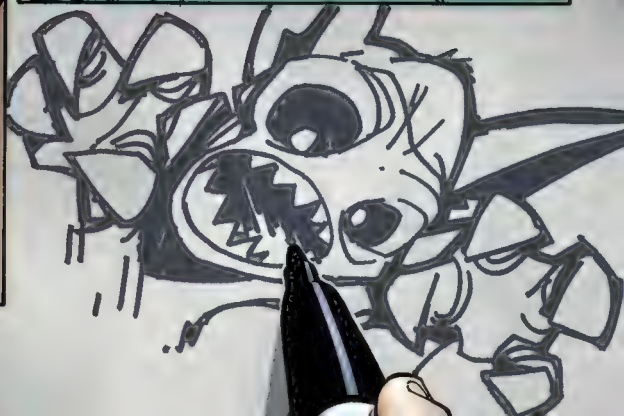
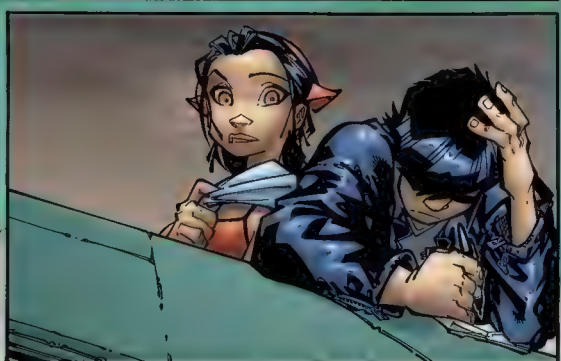
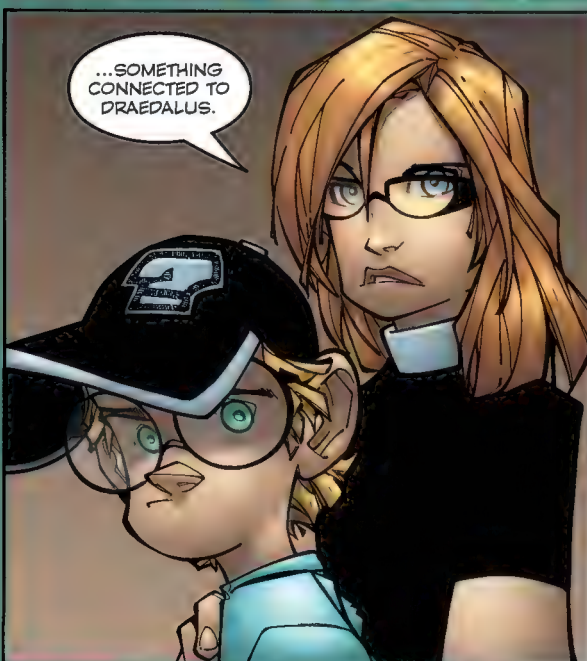
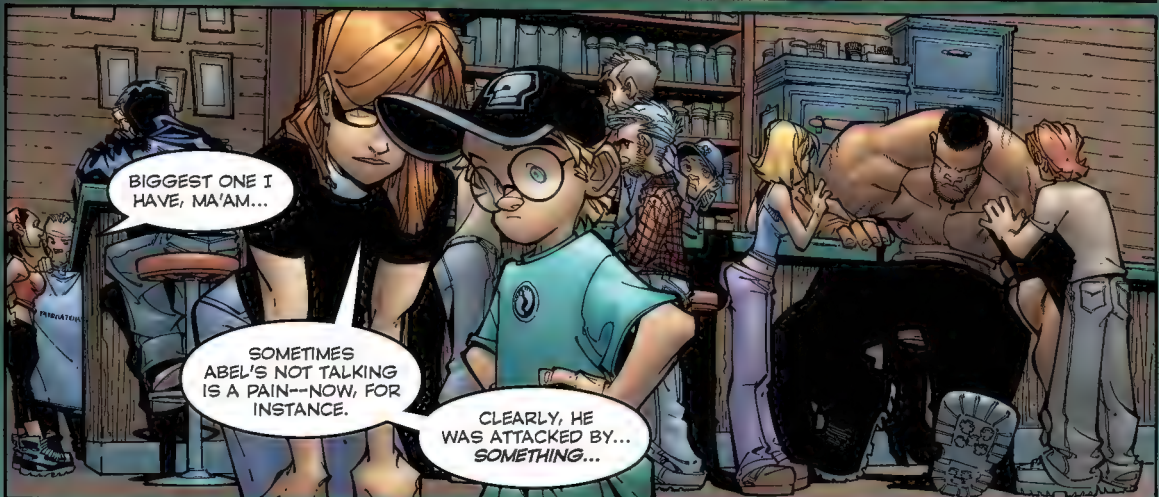
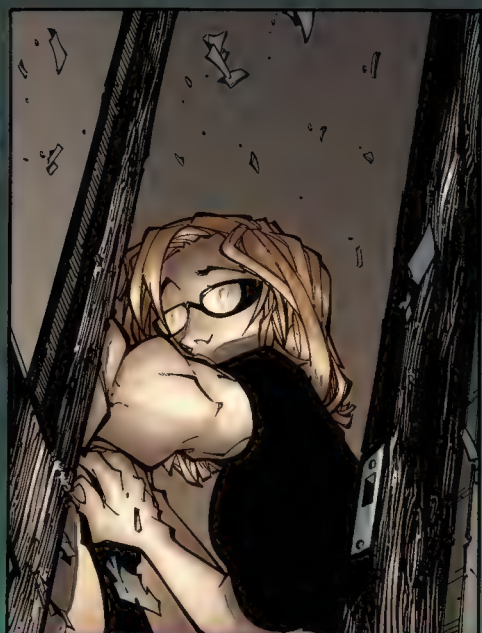
WE'D BEST
BE ON OUR
WAY...

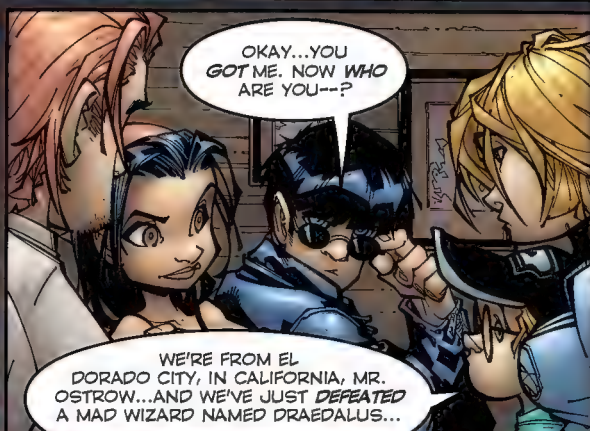


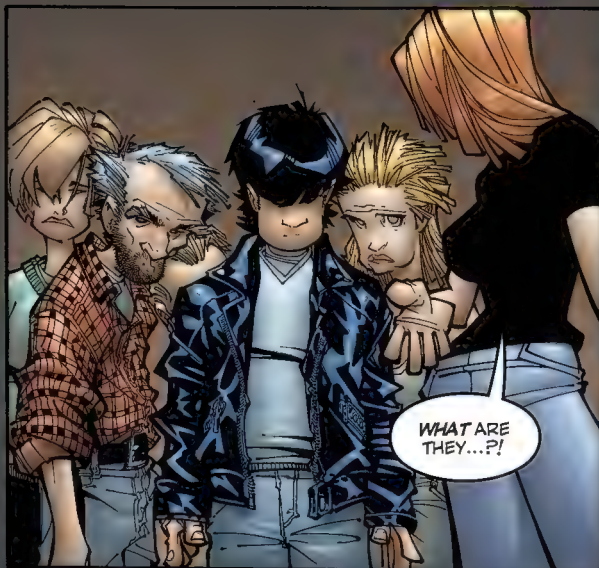
ABOUT THAT,
REVEREND.

THESE NIGHT STORMS CAN
BE FIERCE...I WOULDN'T FEEL
RIGHT SENDING YOU
OUT IN IT.









"THE ONLY WAY THOSE THINGS CAN BE...PHYSICAL IN THIS WORLD IS TO POSSESS AND...TRANSFORM HUMAN FLESH."



"TO MAKE THE POSSESSION PERMANENT, THEY HAVE TO MOLD THE HUMAN BODY INTO ITS NEW SHAPE...PAINFULLY, TERMINALLY."



"BY THE TIME WE GOT TO THE WELL, SOME OF OUR PEOPLE WERE... ALREADY BEING TRANSFORMED... THERE WAS NOTHING WE COULD DO FOR THEM..."



"...EXCEPT TO SEE THAT NO ONE ELSE GOT TAKEN. WE DUMPED ABOUT FIFTY POUNDS OF TNT DOWN THE HOLE--COMPLETE WITH TIMERS AND DETONATORS."



BLOOOOSHH

"WE STOPPED THEM."

"WE BANISHED THE EVIL MAGIC BACK TO THE NETHER WORLD IT CRAWLED OUT OF. BUT WE WERE LEFT WITH MEMENTOS."

"SOME OF THE CREATURES--IN THE FLESH OF OUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY--WERE STUCK ON THIS SIDE."

"LEFT BEHIND."

"THEY WERE OUR SECRET FAILURES. OUR SHAME."

"WE COULDN'T KILL THEM. THEY WERE, AT LEAST IN PART, STILL OUR LOVED ONES. WE DECIDED TO PROTECT THEM."

"A FEW OF US, ANYWAY. THAT'S THE REASON THIS TOWN IS SO EMPTY."

"THESE THINGS AREN'T HUMAN ANYMORE, OR REALLY GOBLINS EITHER. THEY'RE JUST FERAL BEASTS--"

"--TOTALLY CRAZED FROM ABANDONMENT AND PAIN."

"THERE'S NOT MUCH WE CAN DO FOR THEM OTHER THAN FEED THEM... AND STAY OUT OF THEIR WAY..."

"...THEY HATE THE LIGHT AND HEAT, SO WE LET 'EM HAVE THE TOWN AT NIGHT."

IT'S THE LEAST WE CAN DO. IT'S OUR FAULT THEY'RE LIKE... THAT...

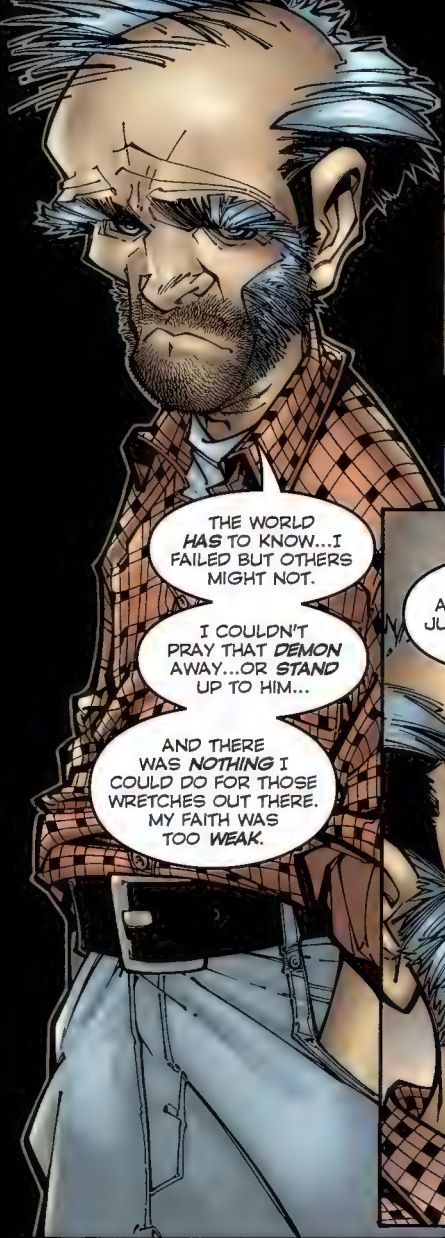
...IN A WAY, IT'S AS IF DRAEDALUS SORT OF WON.

NO. YOU BEAT HIM...THESE POOR CREATURES ARE HIS FAULT--NOT YOURS.

AND WE'LL DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO HELP...ALL OF YOU.

UM, EXCUSE ME... WHY DID YOU DO THE DAMN NATION COMIC--?

AH...THAT'S EASY...HE TOLD ME TO DO IT AS A WARNING.



THE WORLD HAS TO KNOW... I FAILED BUT OTHERS MIGHT NOT.

I COULDN'T PRAY THAT DEMON AWAY...OR STAND UP TO HIM...

AND THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO FOR THOSE WRETCHES OUT THERE. MY FAITH WAS TOO WEAK.



IT'S **NOT** YOUR FAULT-- YOU ALL DID THE BEST YOU COULD AGAINST AN **INCREDIBLE** EVIL.

NO, THIS IS A **JUDGMENT** ON ME...I'VE BEEN ABANDONED BY THE CREATOR FOR MY WEAKNESS.

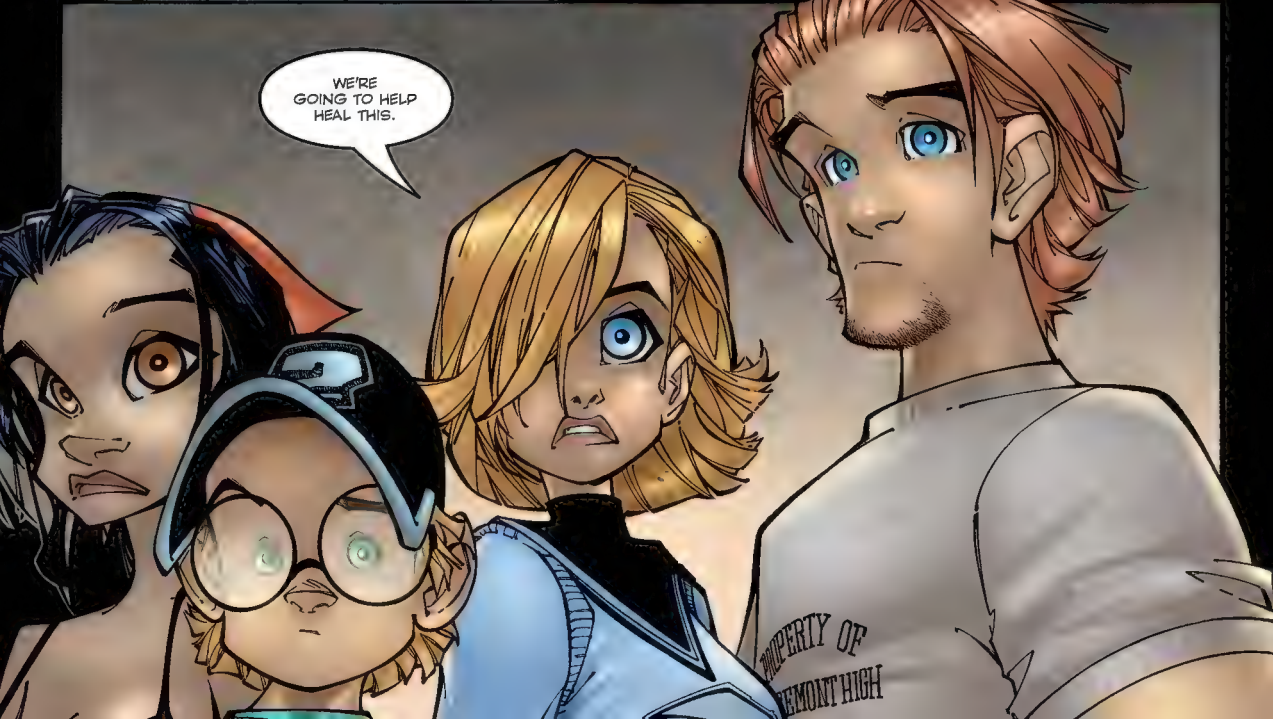


I SINNED AND NOW GOD JUST ISN'T THERE ANYMORE.



THAT'S **NOT** TRUE! LISTEN TO ME, ALL OF YOU! YOU'VE DONE **NOTHING** WRONG!

IN FACT, THE WAY YOU'VE TAKEN CARE OF THOSE POOR THINGS IS ABOVE AND BEYOND THE **RIGHT** THING.



WE'RE GOING TO HELP HEAL THIS.

THE WORLD
HAS TO KNOW...I
FAILED BUT OTHERS
MIGHT NOT.









CHAPTER EIGHT

STUCK IN THE MIDDLE





THEY DEFEATED AN
INTERDIMENSIONAL
MONSTER.

THEY STOPPED
DEAD HIS SCHEME OF
DOMINATING EARTH.



THEY LOST *EVERYTHING* AS
A RESULT--FAMILY, FRIENDS,
EVEN THEIR TOWN.

HARD TO THINK OF WHAT
THEY DID AS A VICTORY.

HARD TO DO ANYTHING BUT PRESS
ON IN HOPE OF FINDING A CLUE TO
UNDOING THEIR LOSS.



THE LADY MINISTER AND THE MUTE
WAR VET ARE THE ONLY FRIENDS THE
TEENS HAVE LEFT IN THE WORLD.

AND THEY MIGHT
BE ENOUGH.



LED BY INSTINCT AND PERHAPS SOMETHING
MORE, THE FUGITIVES WERE DRAWN TO A
DYING DESERT TOWN.

WHERE A HANDFUL OF
REMAINING RESIDENTS CLOSELY
GUARDED A DREAD SECRET.



THIS TOWN TOO
HAD ENCOUNTERED
THE SAME MYSTIC
INVADERS.

AND HAD BARELY
SURVIVED TO TELL
THE TALE.

SOME OF PURGATORY'S PEOPLE
HOWEVER, HAD SURVIVED FOR
TERRIFYING REASONS.

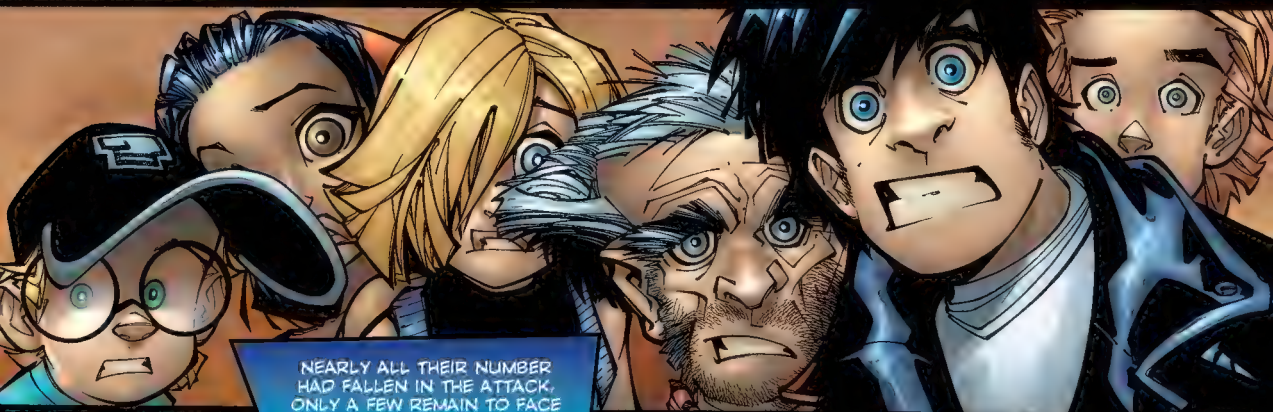
PARTIALLY POSSESSED BY BEINGS FROM
BEYOND AT THE TIME THE INVASION WAS
THWARTED, THESE POOR CREATURES LIVED
ON IN TWISTED, HYBRID FORMS.

NOT TRUE DEMONS, BUT NO LONGER
HUMAN, THESE WRETCHED BEINGS ARE
CRAZED BEASTS--WRACKED BY THE
INTENSE PAIN OF THEIR WARPED FORMS.

SOMEWHERE IN THE
CREATURES' TWISTED
FLESH BEAT THE HEARTS
OF LOVED ONES.

NONE OF THE SURVIVORS
COULD BRING THEMSELVES TO
ABANDON THEM... OR PUT THEM
OUT OF THEIR MISERY.

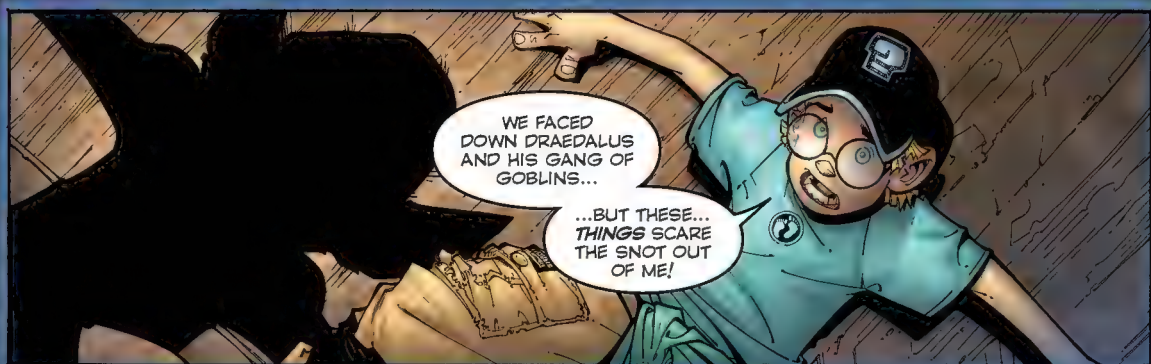
THE INQUISITIVE VISITORS
HOWEVER, SEEM TO HAVE
BROUGHT OUT THE WORST
IN THE HYBRIDS...



NEARLY ALL THEIR NUMBER
HAD FALLEN IN THE ATTACK.
ONLY A FEW REMAIN TO FACE
THE CREATURES' FINAL RUSH...

...AND THERE'S NOT ONE GOOD
REASON TO THINK THEY WILL
SURVIVE FOR MUCH LONGER...







ZACH--
NO!

I'M HOLDING
THE LINE, CASEY--THESE
THINGS AREN'T GETTING
THROUGH ME!

RAH000000000000---!

SSSSSH

WISSHH--

IT'S OVER.
THEY'RE BACK TO THEIR
HIDEY-HOLES FOR AT
LEAST TONIGHT.

WHAT THE
HELL'D YOU DO
TO 'EM?

IT'S...IT'S...
NOTHING...

NOTHING WE CAN
EASILY EXPLAIN, ANYWAY.
WE SEEM TO HAVE BEEN
GIVEN...GIFTS TO DEAL
WITH WEIRD STUFF.

GIFTS...? YOU
MEAN POWERS,
MARK?

WHERE'D YOU
GET THOSE--?!

THINK ABOUT IT,
MAX--THINK.

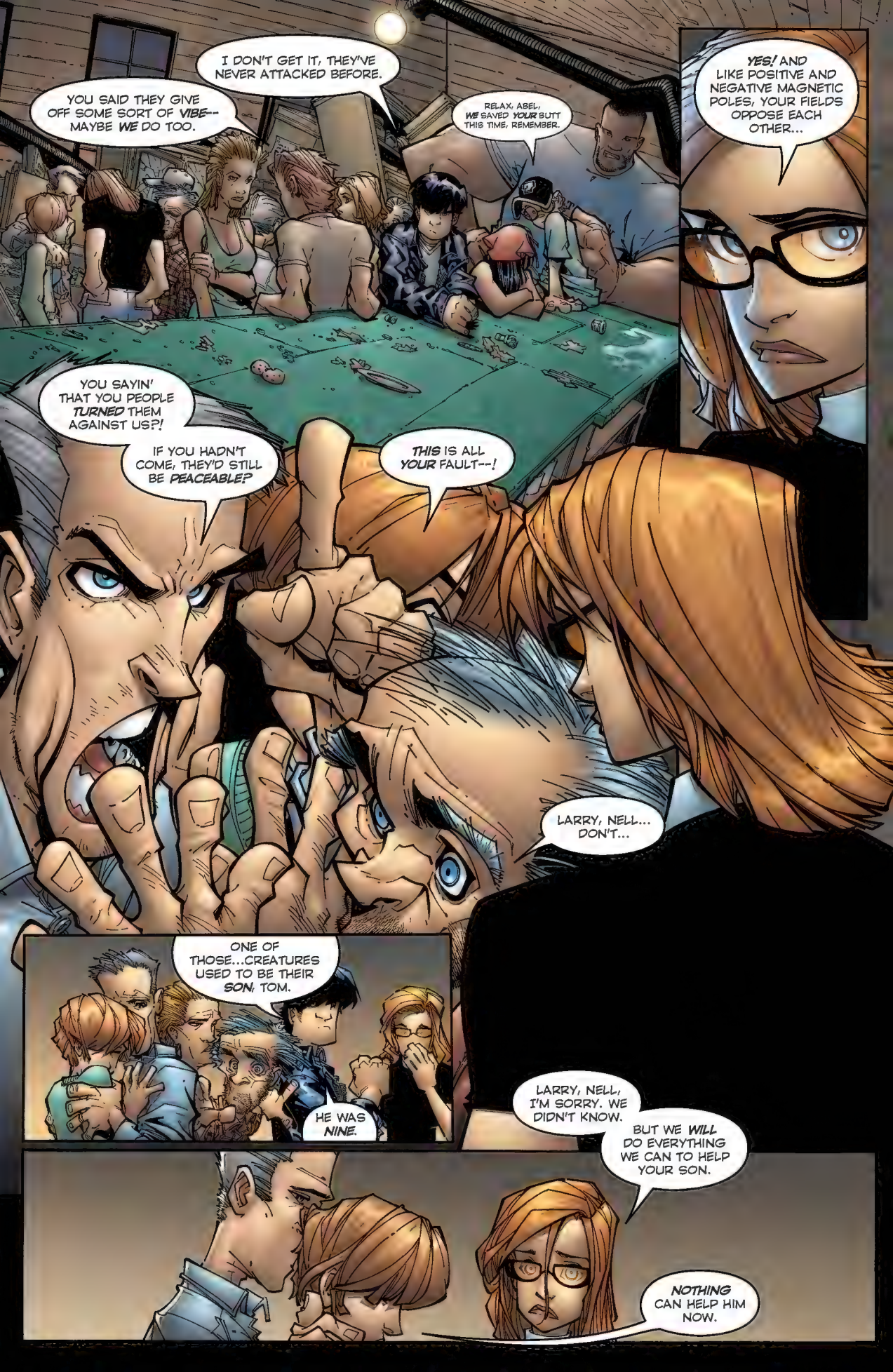
REVEREND BECKY--
ARE YOU OKAY?

OHMY ANYBODY GET
THE LICENSE OF THE
HELLHOUND THAT RAN
OVER ME...?

I'M STILL
NOT USED TO THIS
HEALING POWER OF
YOURS, CASEY...

LIKE I AM.
JUST RELAX
NOW...

YOU NEED
TO HELP THE
OTHERS TOO...



I DON'T GET IT, THEY'VE NEVER ATTACKED BEFORE.

YOU SAID THEY GIVE OFF SOME SORT OF VIBE-- MAYBE WE DO TOO.

RELAX, ABEL, WE SAVED YOUR BUTT THIS TIME, REMEMBER.

YES! AND LIKE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE MAGNETIC POLES, YOUR FIELDS OPPOSE EACH OTHER...

YOU SAYIN' THAT YOU PEOPLE TURNED THEM AGAINST US?!

IF YOU HADN'T COME, THEY'D STILL BE PEACEABLE?

THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT---

LARRY, NELL... DON'T...

ONE OF THOSE...CREATURES USED TO BE THEIR SON, TOM.

HE WAS NINE.

LARRY, NELL, I'M SORRY. WE DIDN'T KNOW.

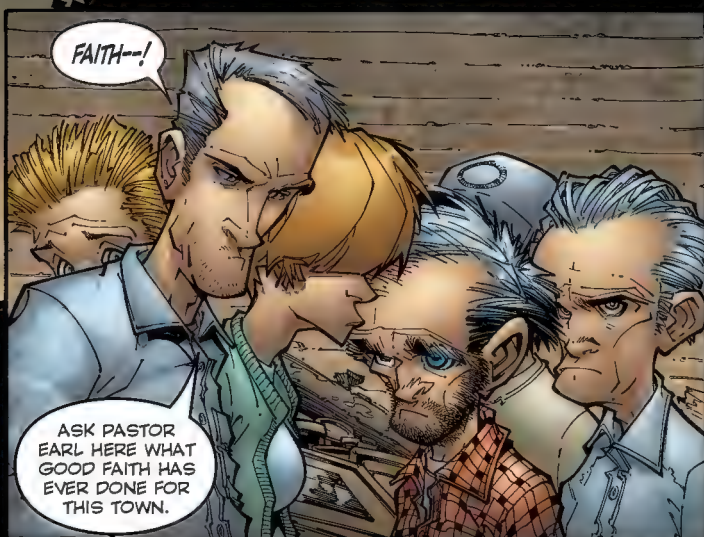
BUT WE WILL DO EVERYTHING WE CAN TO HELP YOUR SON.

NOTHING CAN HELP HIM NOW.



IT MAY BE HARD TO BELIEVE, BUT THESE KIDS HAVE BEEN GIVEN GIFTS...THERE MAY BE SOMETHING THEY CAN DO...

...IF YOU HAVE FAITH...

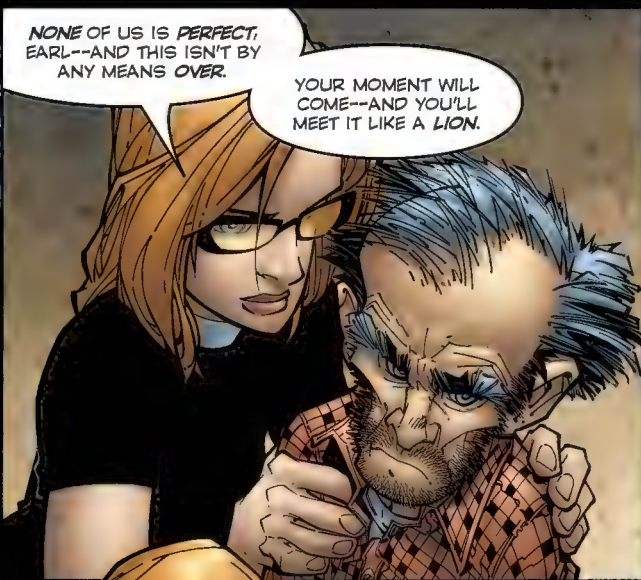


FAITH--!

ASK PASTOR EARL HERE WHAT GOOD FAITH HAS EVER DONE FOR THIS TOWN.



S'TRUE, MY FAITH FAILED US ALL. I COULDN'T STOP THE EVIL... I COULDN'T PROTECT OUR CHILDREN...

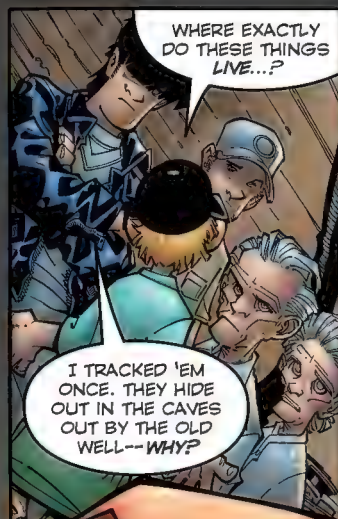


NONE OF US IS PERFECT, EARL--AND THIS ISN'T BY ANY MEANS OVER.

YOUR MOMENT WILL COME--AND YOU'LL MEET IT LIKE A LION.

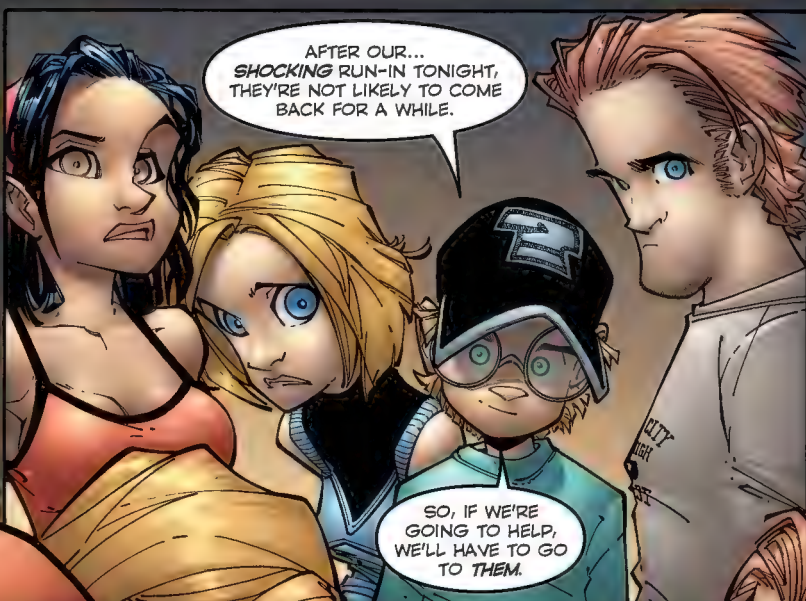


LIKE I SAID, ALL WE NEED IS A LITTLE FAITH.



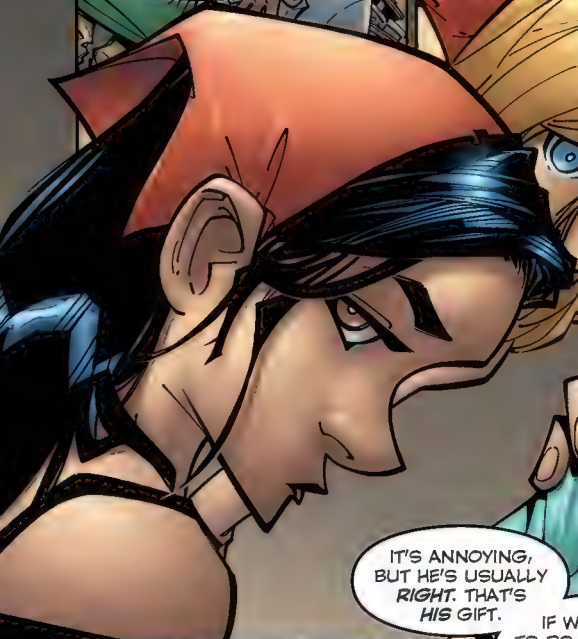
WHERE EXACTLY
DO THESE THINGS
LIVE...?

I TRACKED 'EM
ONCE. THEY HIDE
OUT IN THE CAVES
OUT BY THE OLD
WELL--WHY?



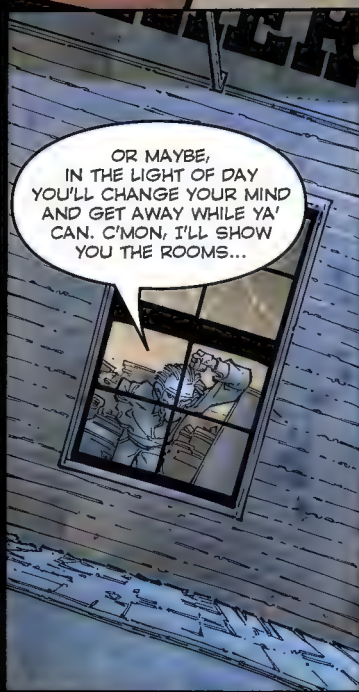
AFTER OUR...
SHOCKING RUN-IN TONIGHT,
THEY'RE NOT LIKELY TO COME
BACK FOR A WHILE.

SO, IF WE'RE
GOING TO HELP,
WE'LL HAVE TO GO
TO THEM.



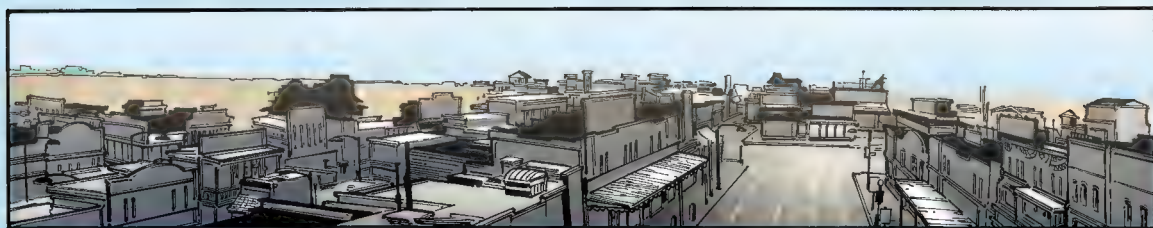
IT'S ANNOYING,
BUT HE'S USUALLY
RIGHT. THAT'S
HIS GIFT.

IF WE'RE GOING
TO DO THIS, THOUGH,
WE SHOULD ALL GET
A GOOD NIGHT'S
REST FIRST.



OR MAYBE,
IN THE LIGHT OF DAY
YOU'LL CHANGE YOUR MIND
AND GET AWAY WHILE YA'
CAN. C'MON, I'LL SHOW
YOU THE ROOMS...







HOW DID DRAEDALUS GET HIS HOOKS INTO YOUR TOWN? HE OFFERED OUR TOWN THEIR HEARTS' DESIRES...

NO DEALS HERE, HE JUST CLAIMED SQUATTER'S RIGHTS ON PURGATORY, I GUESS.

FIGURED NO ONE WOULD NOTICE--OR CARE--WHAT HE DID IN OUR LITTLE GHOST TOWN.

HE AND HIS MONSTERS JUST CHARGED IN UNINVITED AND UNANNOUNCED.



THEY DID ENOUGH SCOUTING THAT WE CAUGHT ON TO 'EM, OF COURSE.

BEING A WEIRDO CARTOONIST HELPED ME SEE IT FOR WHAT IT WAS, I GUESS--AND CONVINCE SOME OF THE FOLKS TO FIGHT BACK.

I NEVER UNDERSTOOD WHAT DRAEDALUS WAS AFTER EXACTLY...

...IT WAS SOMETHING MORE THAN JUST CONQUERING EARTH, THOUGH...



YES...THERE'S SOME SPECIFIC TREASURE THAT MONSTER WANTS, I'M SURE OF IT.

THAT'S IT I GUESS...?

"YES... THAT'S WHAT'S LEFT OF THE WELL."

"AND THOSE CAVES ARE WHERE... THEY SLEEP."

I DON'T KNOW.

BUT SOMETHING WILL PRESENT ITSELF.

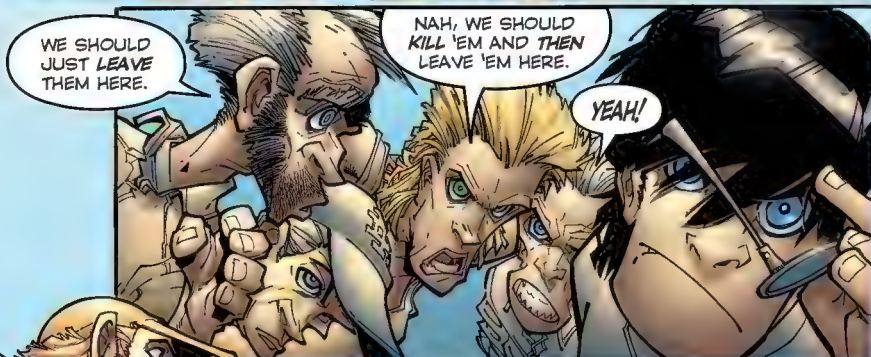
IF THEY SLEEP-- OR DO ANYTHING HUMAN ANYMORE... POOR BASTARDS.

WHAT EXACTLY ARE WE GONNA DO FOR 'EM ANYWAY--?

EEEEW! IT'S LIKE WE'RE WALKING THROUGH JELL-O ALL OF A SUDDEN.

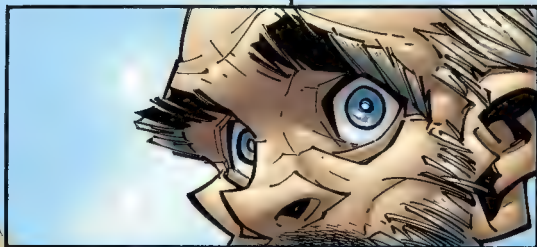
YEAH... REALLY PUTRID JELL-O!

THAT VIBE THE CREATURES GAVE OFF IS EVEN STRONGER HERE!





YOU CAN'T
HOLD US OFF
ALL DAY!



ABEL--NO!
THEY CAN'T HELP
THEMSELVES!

IT'S THE
ATMOSPHERE OF
THIS AWFUL PLACE--
IT'S POISONING
THEIR SPIRITS!

KIDS--RUN!
WE NEED
TO DO SOMETHING
TO STOP THEM--
BUT WHAT?!

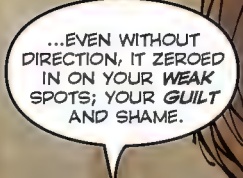
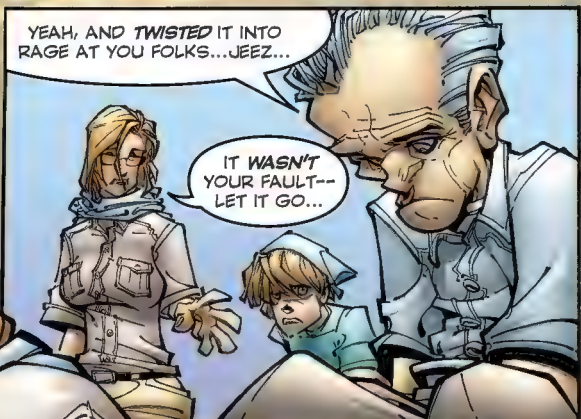
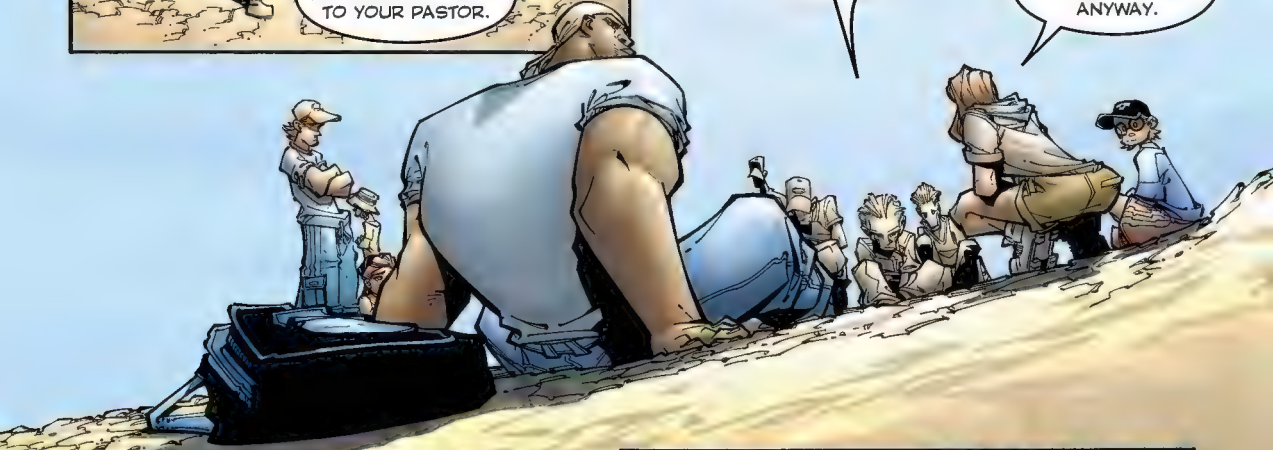
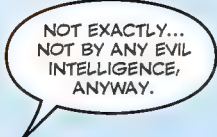


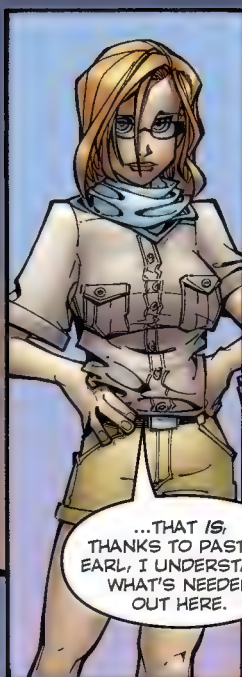
IN THE NAME
OF GOD, I BID ALL
POWERS OF EVIL
TO DISPERSE...!

IN CHRIST'S
NAME I ORDER YOU
TO BEGONE!

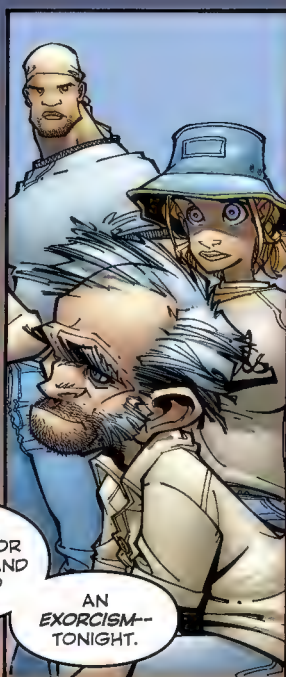


I COMMAND YOU:
GET OUT!





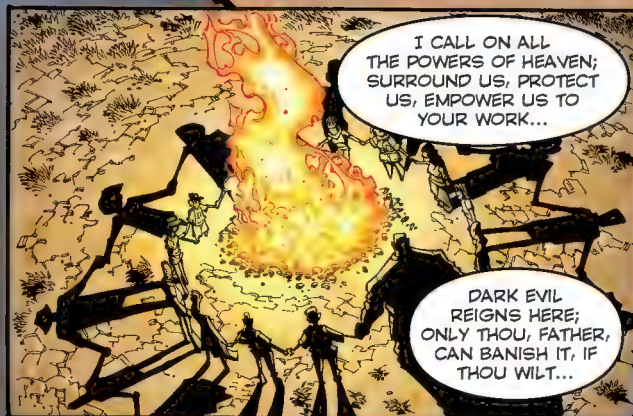
...THAT IS, THANKS TO PASTOR EARL, I UNDERSTAND WHAT'S NEEDED OUT HERE.



AN EXORCISM-- TONIGHT.



LET'S GET THE SHOW STARTED--THEY'LL BE COMING OUT SOON. EVERYBODY JOIN HANDS.



I CALL ON ALL THE POWERS OF HEAVEN; SURROUND US, PROTECT US, EMPOWER US TO YOUR WORK...

DARK EVIL REIGNS HERE; ONLY THOU, FATHER, CAN BANISH IT, IF THOU WILT...

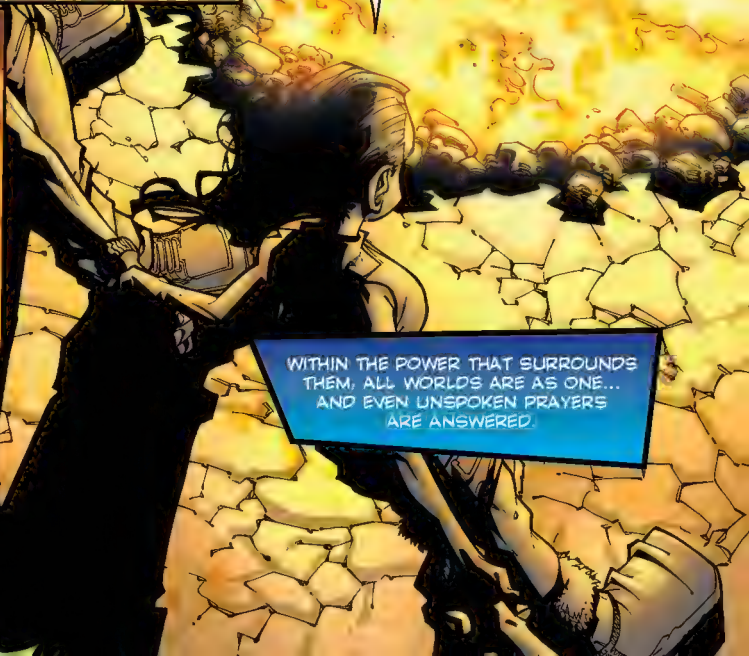
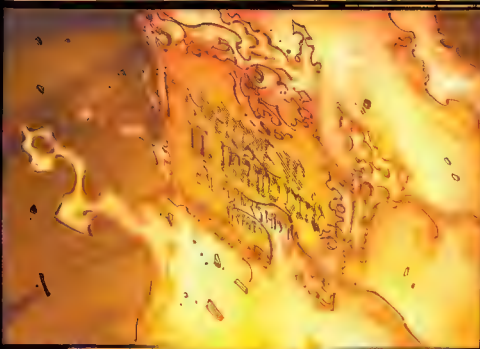
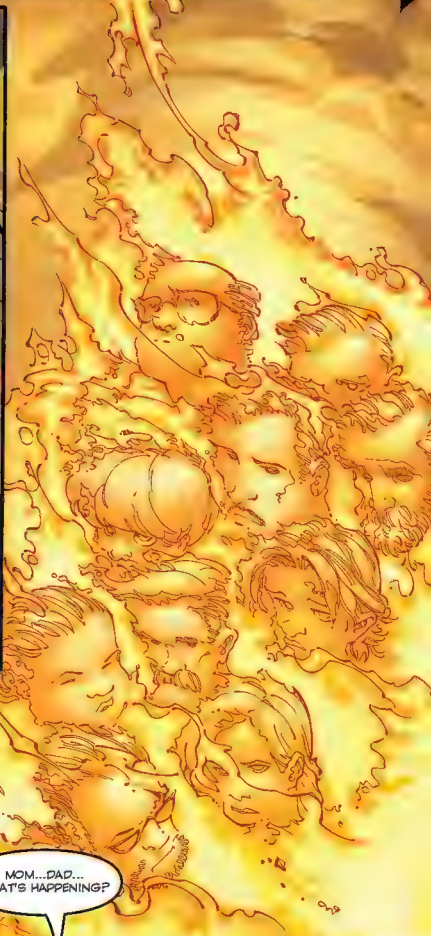


...YOUR PEOPLE CALL UPON YOU, LORD-- ACT THROUGH US TO CLEANSE THIS PLACE!



AND FREE YOUR CHILDREN WHO ARE IMPRISONED IN DREADFUL ASPECT, WE PRAY...!

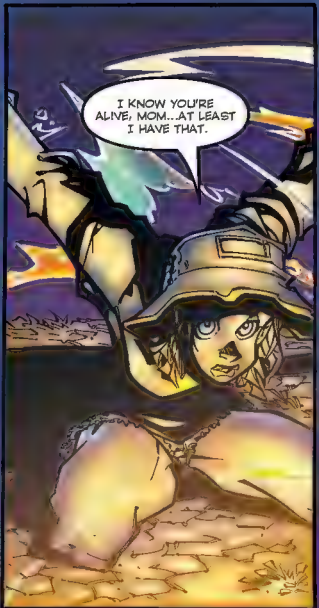
OUR HOPE IS ONLY IN THOU...





"THEY'RE FADING,
WE'RE LOSING THEM--!"

"AGAIN..."



I KNOW YOU'RE
ALIVE, MOM... AT LEAST
I HAVE THAT.



CREATED IN YOUR
IMAGE, THESE CHILDREN
DESERVE THEIR RIGHTFUL
FORMS, LORD--FREE THEM,
WE IMPLORE YOU!







HELLO...?

WHERE ARE WE...?

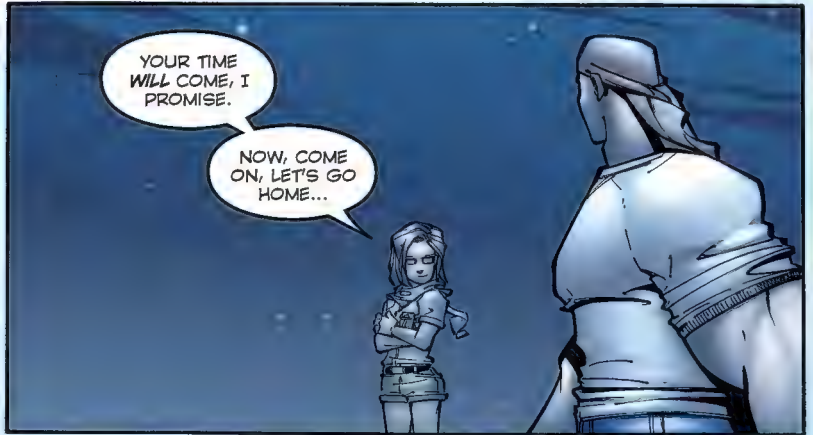
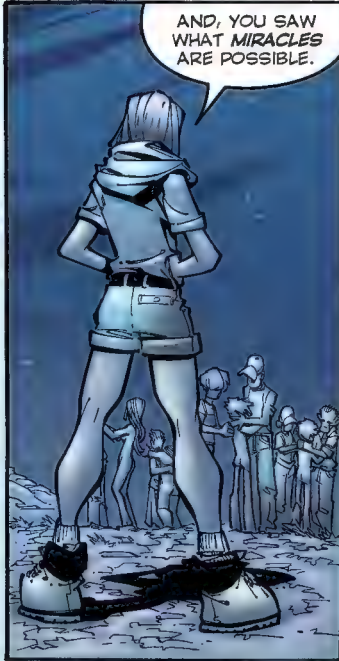
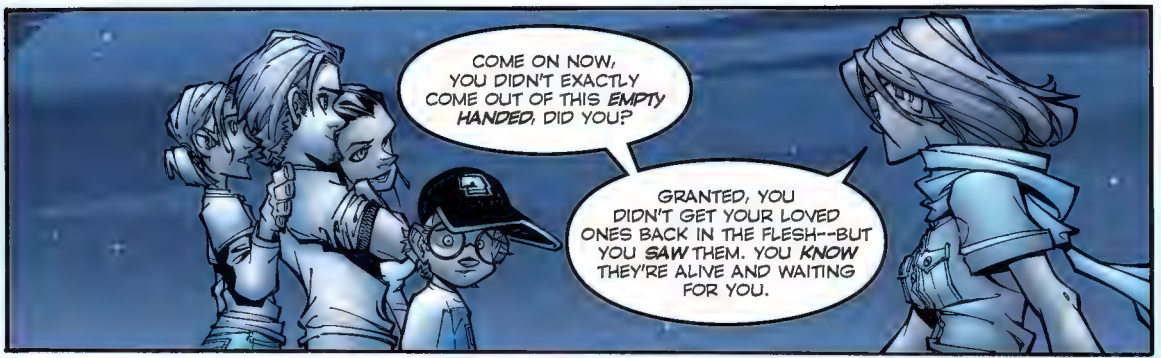
TOMMY!!

THANK THE LORD, THEY'RE BACK-- YAHOO!

YOU BELONG DOWN THERE, EARL... AND YOU'VE MORE THAN REDEEMED YOURSELF. GO.

BUT, MY FAIL--

YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO HAS TO FORGIVE YOU. GO.



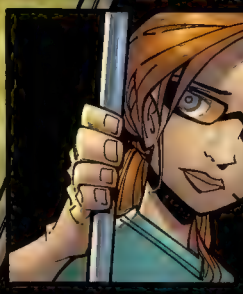


HI--? I NEED A RIDE--?

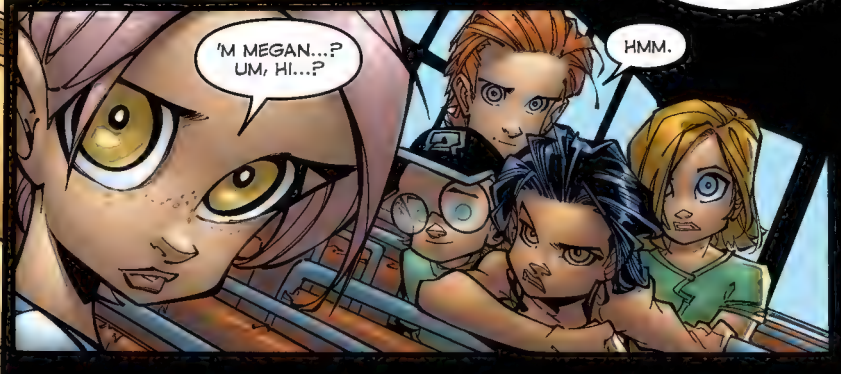
AREN'T YOU A LITTLE YOUNG TO BE ON YOUR OWN?



YES, I GUESS. I...UH... RAN AWAY, AND NOW I'M TRYING TO GET HOME...



THAT WE CAN HELP YOU WITH. WELCOME ABOARD, MISS...?



'M MEGAN...? UM, HI...?

HMM.

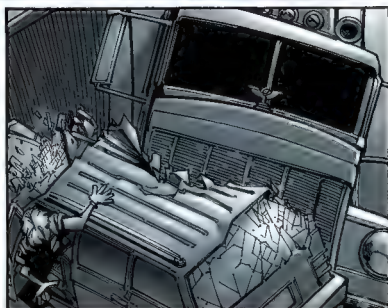
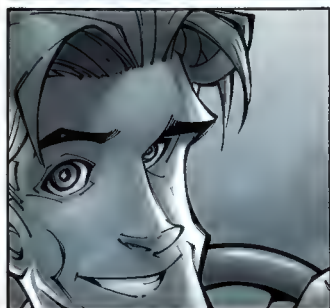
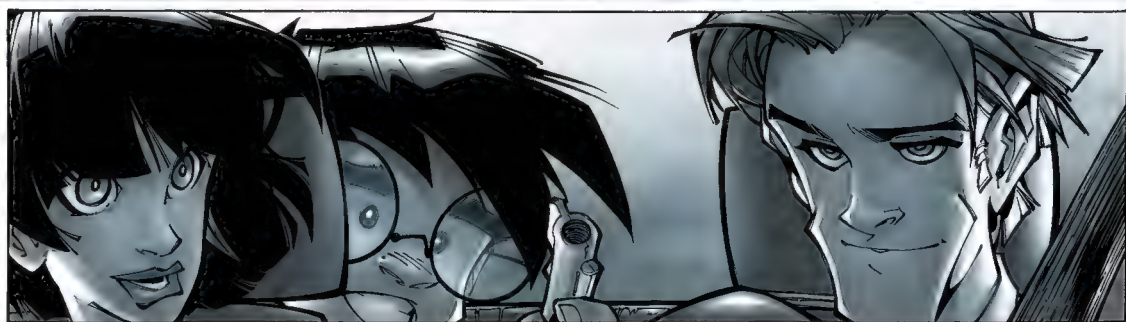
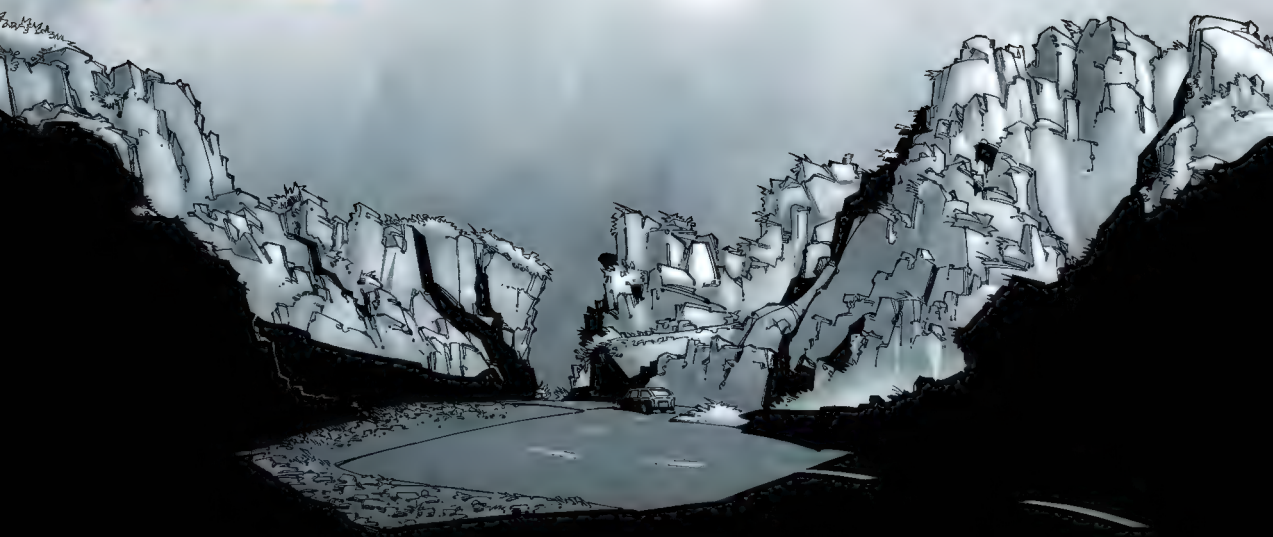


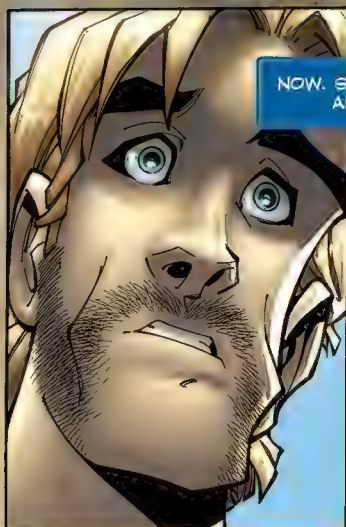
CHAPTER NINE

TWISTING ROAD



EIGHT MONTHS AGO



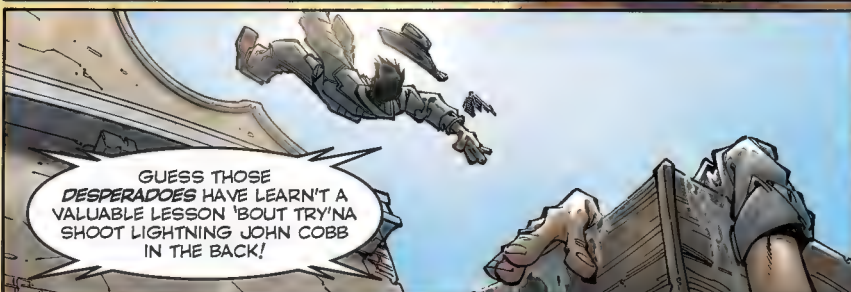
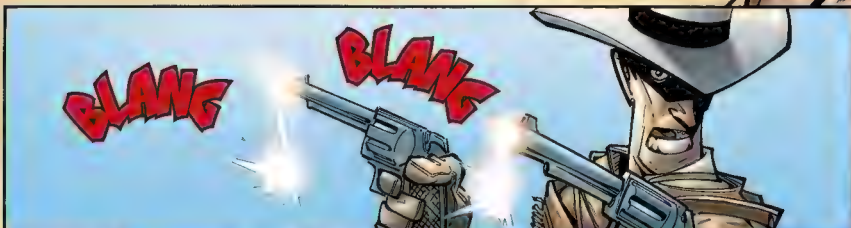


NOW, STERLING CITY,
ARIZONA.

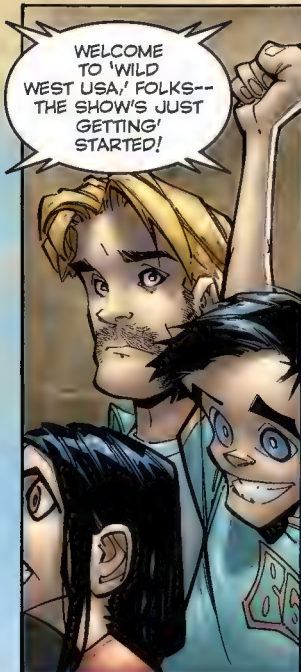
...DANGER
STRIKES WITH
LIGHTNING SPEED
FOLKS--WHEN
YOU LEAST
EXPECT IT...



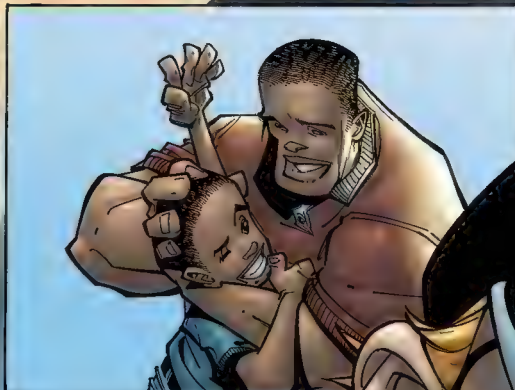
...BUT THE
SHERIFF IS EVEN
FASTER!



GUESS THOSE
DESPERADOES HAVE LEARN'T A
VALUABLE LESSON 'BOUT TRY'NA
SHOOT LIGHTNING JOHN COBB
IN THE BACK!



WELCOME
TO 'WILD
WEST USA,' FOLKS--
THE SHOW'S JUST
GETTING
STARTED!



AND,
REMEMBER,
FOLKS--WE'RE FUN
FOR THE WHOLE
FAMILY!





YIPPEE-EYE-OH,
MARK--ISN'T THIS
GREAT?

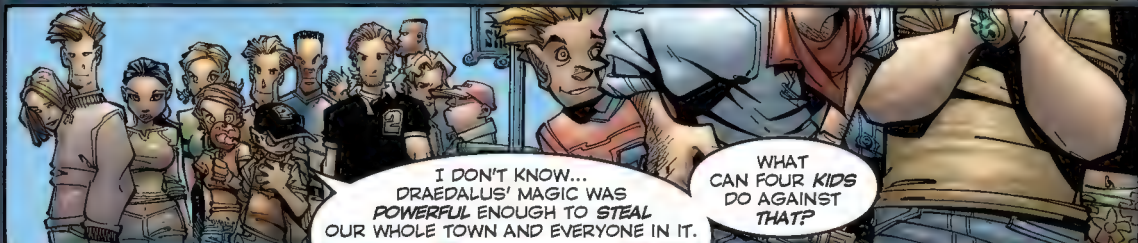
SURE,
ZACH, FUN FOR
THE WHOLE
FAMILY.



NUUUH! AND WE'VE ALL
LOST OUR FAMILIES!
I'M SORRY, MARK...
I FORGOT FOR
A WHILE...

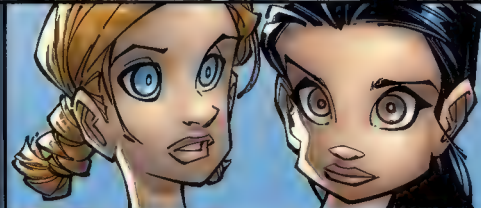
IT'S OKAY...
FORGETTING FOR A LITTLE
WHILE WOULD BE A BLESSING.
I MISS MY DAD...

THEY'RE OUT
THERE, MARK--SOMEWHERE--
AND WE ARE GOING TO FIND THEM.



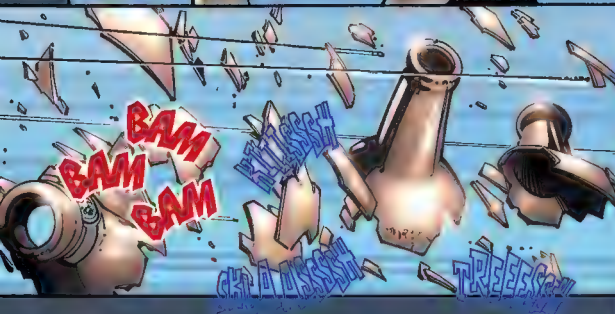
I DON'T KNOW...
DRAEDALUS' MAGIC WAS
POWERFUL ENOUGH TO STEAL
OUR WHOLE TOWN AND EVERYONE IN IT.

WHAT
CAN FOUR KIDS
DO AGAINST
THAT?



THE FOUR
OF US SENT AN
ENTIRE DEMON ARMY
WHIMPERING BACK TO
THEIR HIDEY-HELLHOLE,
BUD!

THAT APE-
FACED SORCERER
BETTER WATCH OUT
FOR US!



...DEAD-
EYE DUANE
NEVER MISSES,
FOLKS!



WE'RE GONNA TAKE A BREAK, NOW FOLKS, BUT THE RIP-ROARING ACTION STARTS AGAIN IN 45 MINUTES!



NO...WHEN WE PICKED YOU UP ON THE ROAD, I SAID WE'D GET YOU SAFELY TO YOUR AUNT'S PLACE, AND WE WILL.

STILL NO ANSWER AT YOUR AUNT'S, MEGAN. IS THIS THE RIGHT NUMBER...?

THAT'S IT, REVEREND BECKY. I DON'T KNOW WHERE SHE IS...

...IF I'M HOLDING YOU UP, I CAN JUST FIND... SOMEPLACE TO STAY AND...

WE CAN USE A BREAK AFTER EVERYTHING WE'VE BEEN THROUGH. WE'LL STAY A FEW DAYS AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS.

S'MATTER, ABEL, YOU DON'T LIKE THE OLD WEST?

WE DO--- THANKS, BECK!



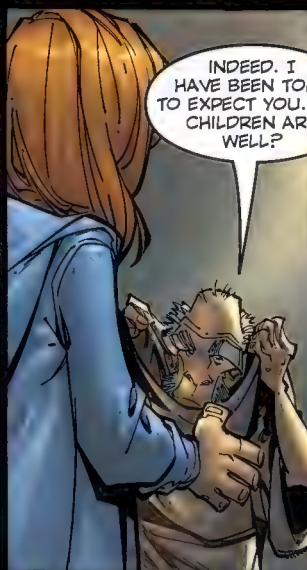
SO, IT'S
NOT ALL
DODGE
CITY.

LET'S SEE,
FOURTH AND
TAOS...JUST
AHEAD...



REVEREND
GOODWIN, I
PRESUME...?

YES, AND
YOU'RE FATHER
HALCIO, YES?



INDEED. I
HAVE BEEN TOLD
TO EXPECT YOU. THE
CHILDREN ARE
WELL?



THEY...
ARE. THEY'VE
LOST SO MUCH,
THOUGH.

AND ALL
OF US PRAY
THAT WHAT WAS
LOST WILL SOON BE
RESTORED...

IS MY
CLERICAL COLLAR
A PROBLEM,
FATHER...?



NO, MY DEAR--NOT FOR ME. MY SUPERIORS MAYBE, SINCE THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND PROTESTANTS...

...BUT I KNOW YOU ARE MERELY ANSWERING THE LORD'S CALL.



BESIDES, WE BOTH KNOW WE ARE PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER THAN DOCTRINAL SQUABBLES.

THE COUNCIL SENT THIS FOR YOU.



WHOA...



THIS IS TOO MUCH...!



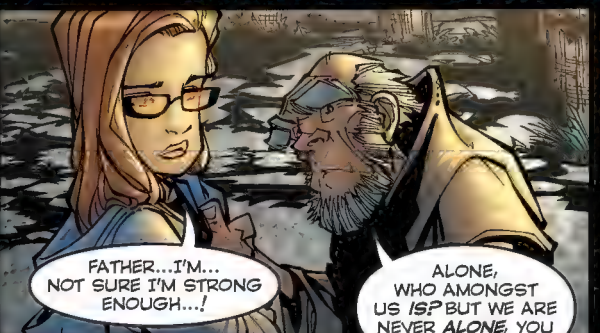
YOURS IS A LONG, TWISTING JOURNEY, YET, MY DEAR-- THE CHILDREN'S TOO. THIS WILL EASE THE WAY.



THAT MONSTER IS EVER SEEKING NEW AVENUES OF ATTACK AGAINST OUR POOR WORLD...

...HE WILL EVENTUALLY SUCCEED. WE WILL NEED YOUR YOUNG PEOPLE, AND OTHERS LIKE THEM, IF WE ARE TO SURVIVE.

TAKE CARE OF THEM, TRAIN THEM... BE READY...



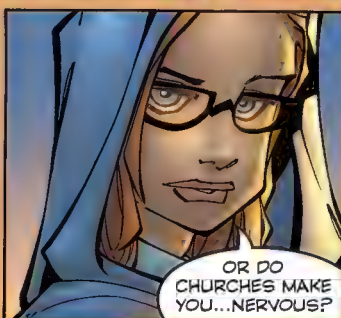
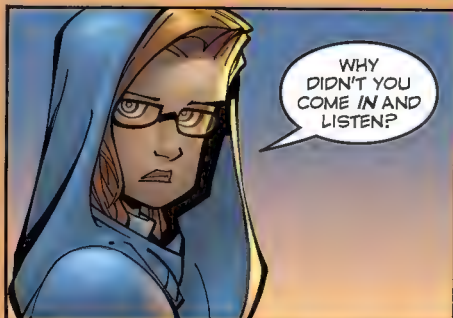
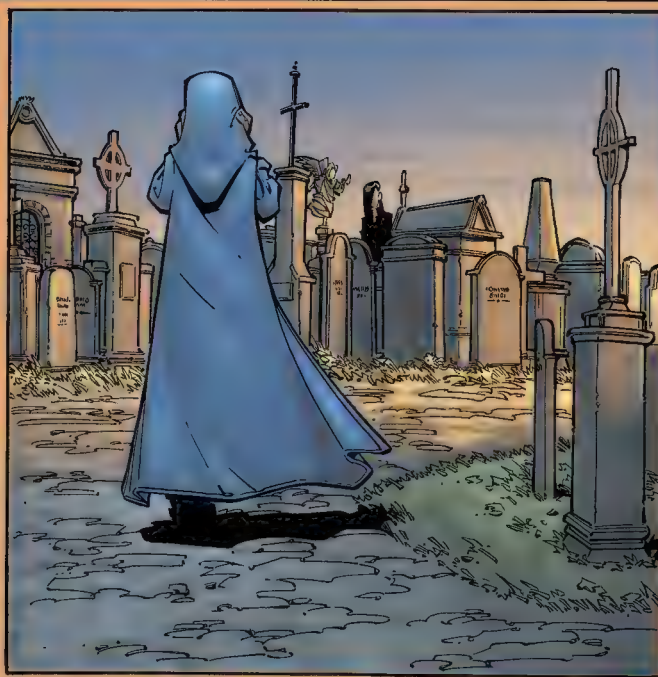
FATHER...I'M... NOT SURE I'M STRONG ENOUGH...!

ALONE, WHO AMONGST US IS? BUT WE ARE NEVER ALONE, YOU KNOW THAT...



...WE ARE ON THE SIDE OF ANGELS MY DEAR, AND GREATER.

BLESSINGS NOW--I THINK OTHER DANGER AWAITS YOU AS WELL.

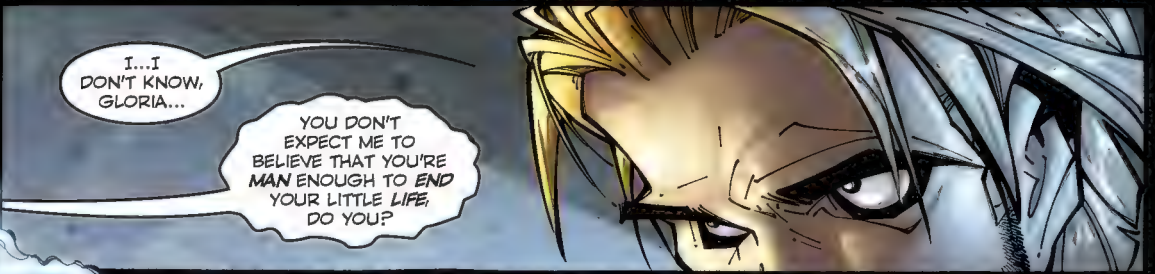


YAAAH!





WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH THAT, ADAM?



I...I DON'T KNOW, GLORIA...

YOU DON'T EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT YOU'RE MAN ENOUGH TO END YOUR LITTLE LIFE, DO YOU?



YOU ARE NOT READY FOR THE OTHER SIDE, ADAM-- TRUST ME. BESIDES, YOU HAVEN'T DEALT WITH DENNY...

ISN'T... ISN'T HE WITH YOU?



YOU TELL ME-- YOU LOST HIM.

GO TO THE WINDOW, TELL ME WHAT YOU SEE.



HOW...?



...DENNY?!



MY...GOD.
DENNY!



MARK...
WHAT IS IT?
DRAEDALUS?

WHAT...?
NO, CASEY--I HAD
A...CREEPY FEELING FOR
A SECOND, BUT IT'S
GONE NOW.



WHOA--
WHEN MARK
GETS "FEELINGS"
...LOOK OUT!

C'MON,
JESS...

DRED-LUS?

HIS...
FAVORITE PS2
GAME. LET'S
GO EAT.

ELSEWHERE LAS
VEGAS, NEVADA.

HONEY...
I'M HOME!

AH, THE
EVER LOVELY
KATE WEBB--DON'T
BOTHR TO GET
UP...HEH.

IT TOOK A
WHILE, BUT I'M GLAD
TO SEE THAT YOU'VE FINALLY
REACHED THAT FABULOUS
PLIABLE STAGE.

OH, KATE
DEAR...?

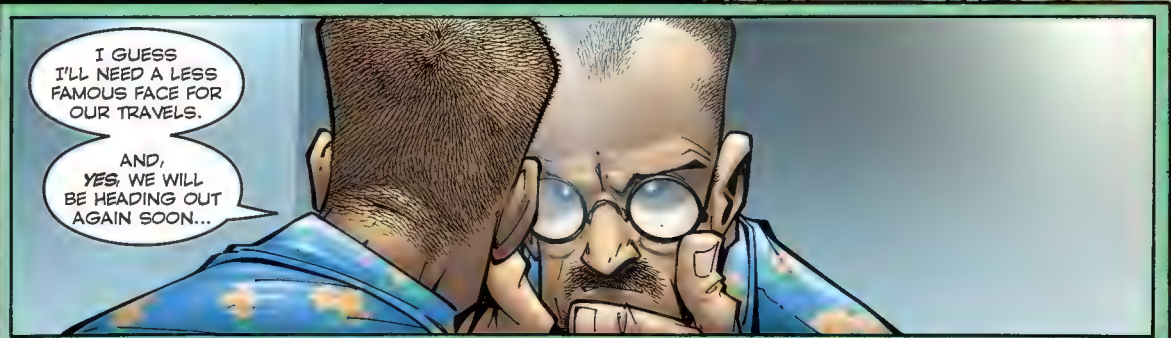
STILL
FRESHENING
UP?

HOSTAGES
ARE SO MUCH EASIER
TO DEAL WITH WHEN THEY
FINALLY GIVE UP.

OH, THIS
IS BAD.

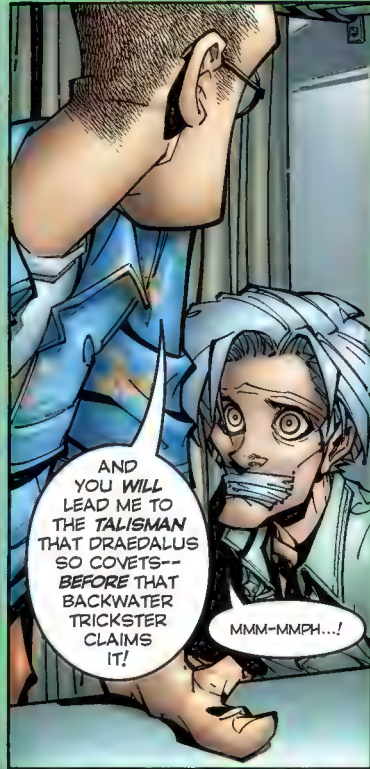
THE REAL
NICK BRIDGES IS
WANDERING AROUND OUT
THERE, MUCKING UP MY
DISGUISE.

SOFTWARE WIZARD TO SPEAK
PRESS' EDUCATION SUMMIT IN LONDON



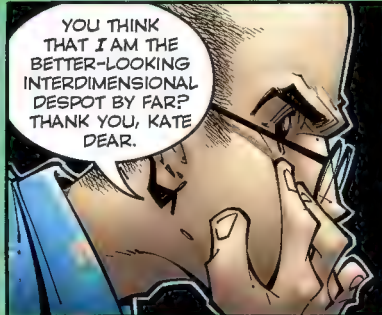
I GUESS
I'LL NEED A LESS
FAMOUS FACE FOR
OUR TRAVELS.

AND,
YES, WE WILL
BE HEADING OUT
AGAIN SOON...



AND
YOU WILL
LEAD ME TO
THE TALISMAN
THAT DRAEDALUS
SO COVETS--
BEFORE THAT
BACKWATER
TRICKSTER
CLAIMS
IT!

MMM-MMPH...!



YOU THINK
THAT I AM THE
BETTER-LOOKING
INTERDIMENSIONAL
DESPOT BY FAR?
THANK YOU, KATE
DEAR.



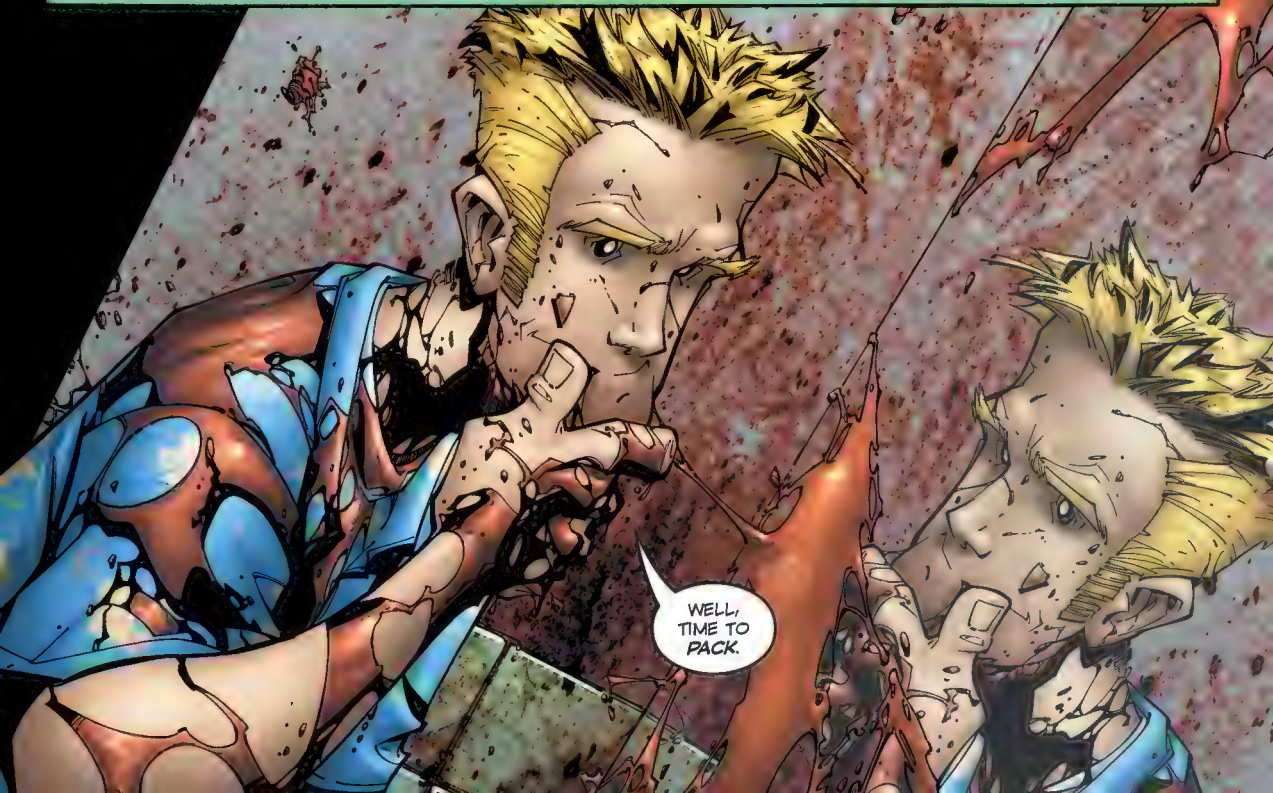
YOU MIGHT
NOT SAY THAT
IF YOU SAW MY
TRUE FACE...



PERHAPS YOU SHOULD LOOK AWAY
AS I MAKE THE CHANGE, HMM...?



SSHLORRRK!



WELL,
TIME TO
PACK.



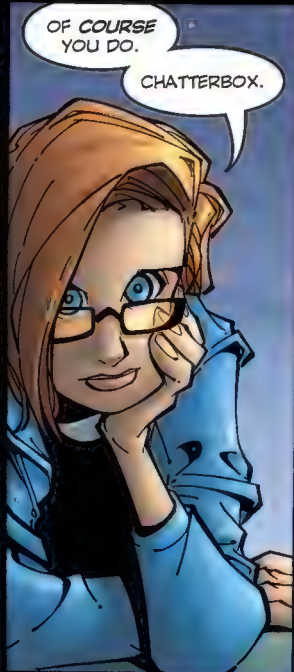
ALL THEY'VE BEEN THROUGH AND THEY CAN STILL HAVE FUN. AMAZING.

MARK SEEMED HARDEST HIT, BUT EVEN HE'S RELAXING, DON'T YOU THINK...?



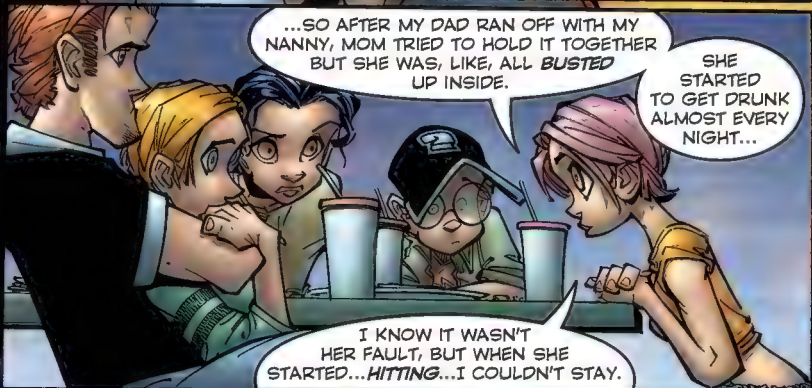
TWO LARGE WITH THE WORKS AND A BOTTOMLESS PITCHER OF COKE?! DIDYA WIN THE LOTTERY, BECK?

SOMETHING LIKE THAT. ENJOY.



OF COURSE YOU DO.

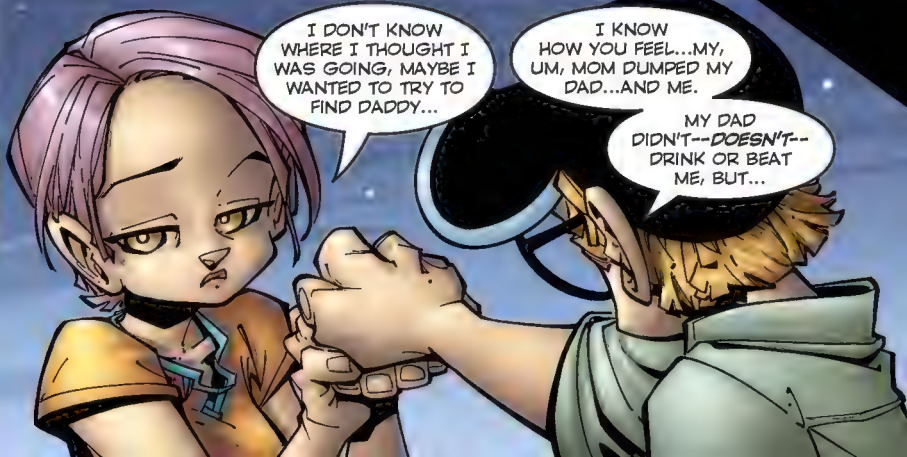
CHATTERBOX.



...SO AFTER MY DAD RAN OFF WITH MY NANNY, MOM TRIED TO HOLD IT TOGETHER BUT SHE WAS, LIKE, ALL BUSTED UP INSIDE.

SHE STARTED TO GET DRUNK ALMOST EVERY NIGHT...

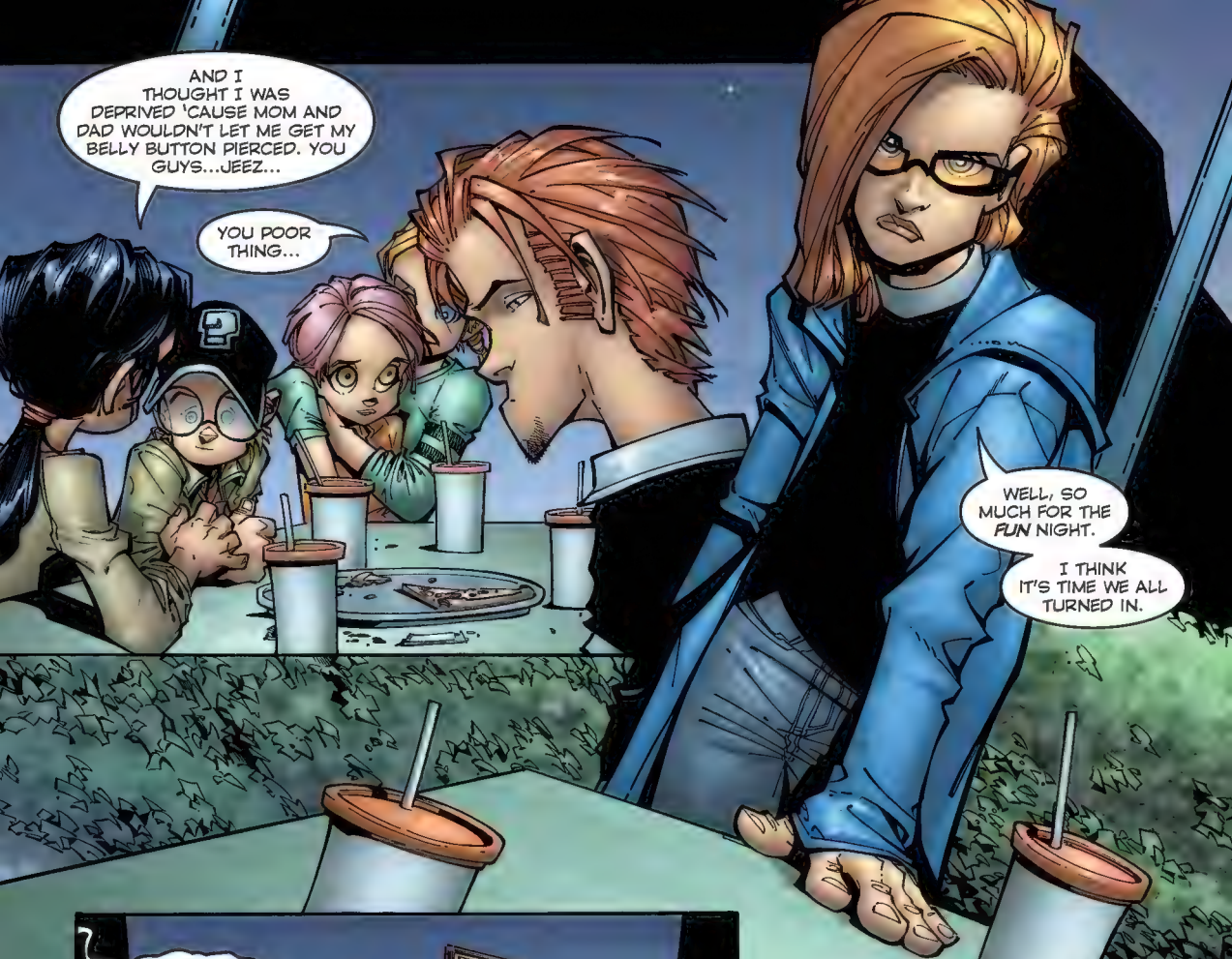
I KNOW IT WASN'T HER FAULT, BUT WHEN SHE STARTED...HITTING...I COULDN'T STAY.



I DON'T KNOW WHERE I THOUGHT I WAS GOING, MAYBE I WANTED TO TRY TO FIND DADDY...

I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL...MY, UM, MOM DUMPED MY DAD...AND ME.

MY DAD DIDN'T--DOESN'T--DRINK OR BEAT ME, BUT...



AND I
THOUGHT I WAS
DEPRIVED 'CAUSE MOM AND
DAD WOULDN'T LET ME GET MY
BELLY BUTTON PIERCED. YOU
GUYS...JEEZ...

YOU POOR
THING...

WELL, SO
MUCH FOR THE
FUN NIGHT.

I THINK
IT'S TIME WE ALL
TURNED IN.



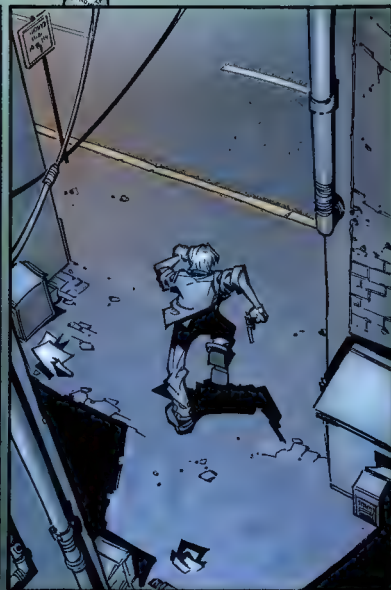
ARE YOU
JUST GOING TO
STAND THERE?!

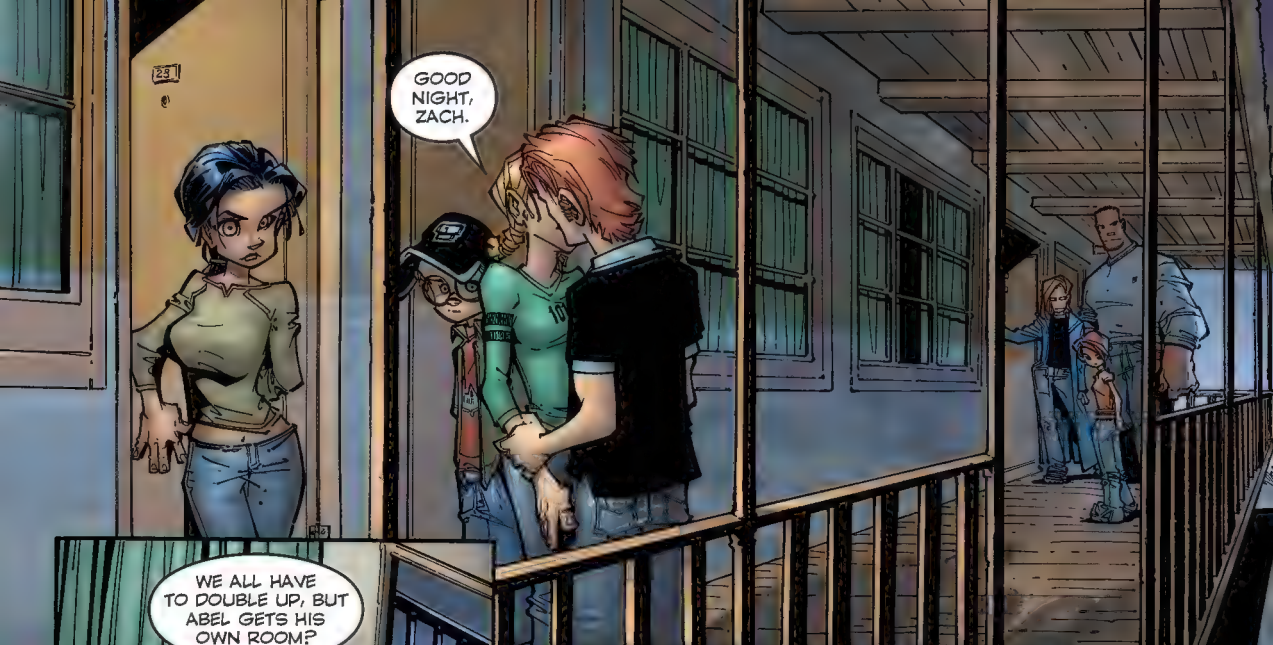


AREN'T
YOU GOING TO
GET YOUR SON,
WEAKLING?

DENNY'S...
DEAD...ISN'T
HE?

WHAT DO
YOUR EYES TELL
YOU, FOOL? GO...
GET HIM.





GOOD
NIGHT,
ZACH.



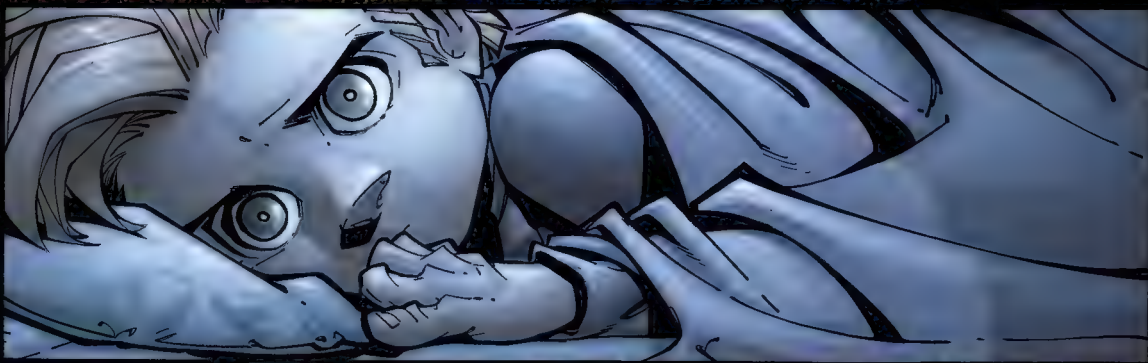
WE ALL HAVE
TO DOUBLE UP, BUT
ABEL GETS HIS
OWN ROOM?

BE GLAD.
GUY NEVER SPEAKS,
BUT MAN DOES
HE SNORE!

GO
FIGURE.



GOOD
NIGHT, JOHN
BOY...





WHAAAAA!

THUNDER

HEY--P!

I'M NOT HIM...NOT YOUR SON.

TH-THAT'S IT, ISN'T IT?

WH-WHAT DO YOU WANT...?



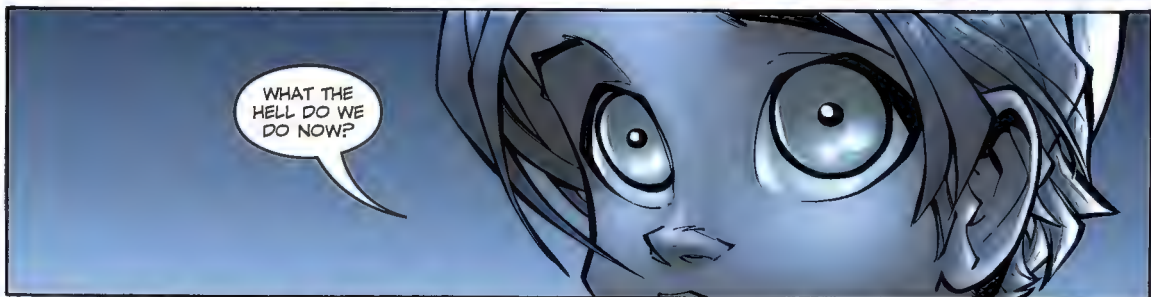
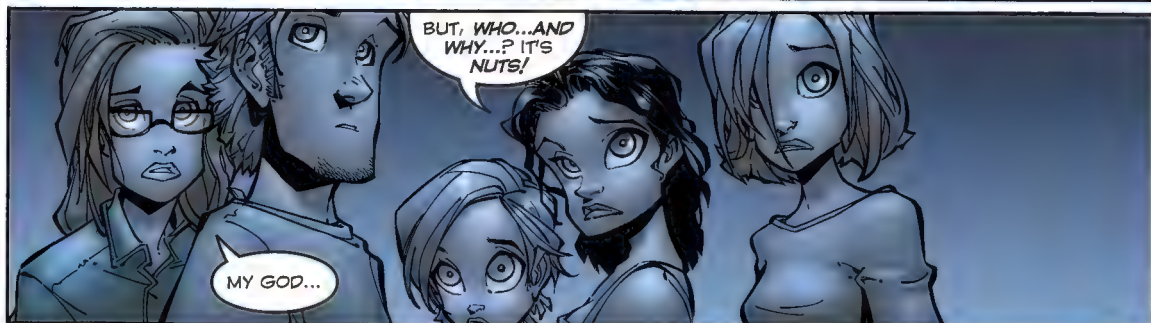
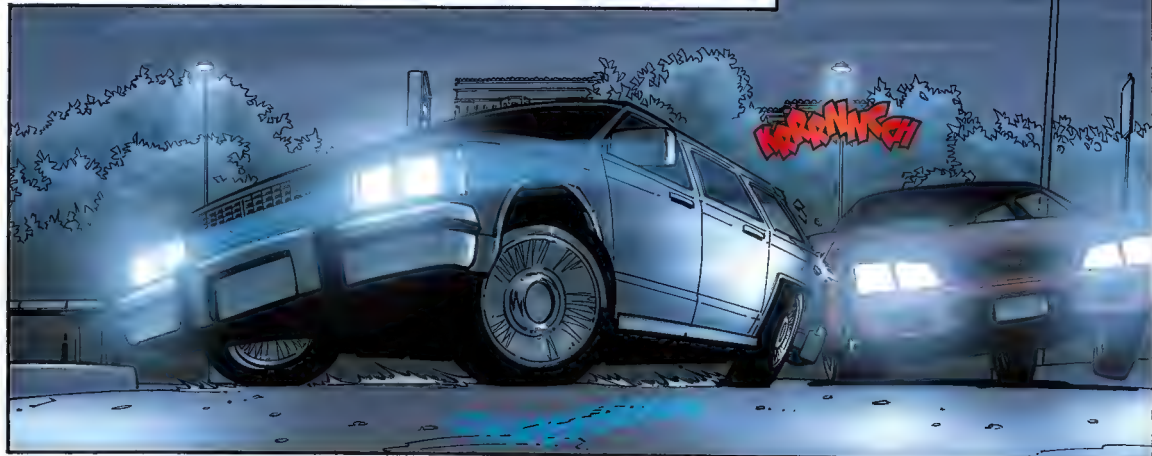
IGNORE THE BACKTALK, LET'S GO!

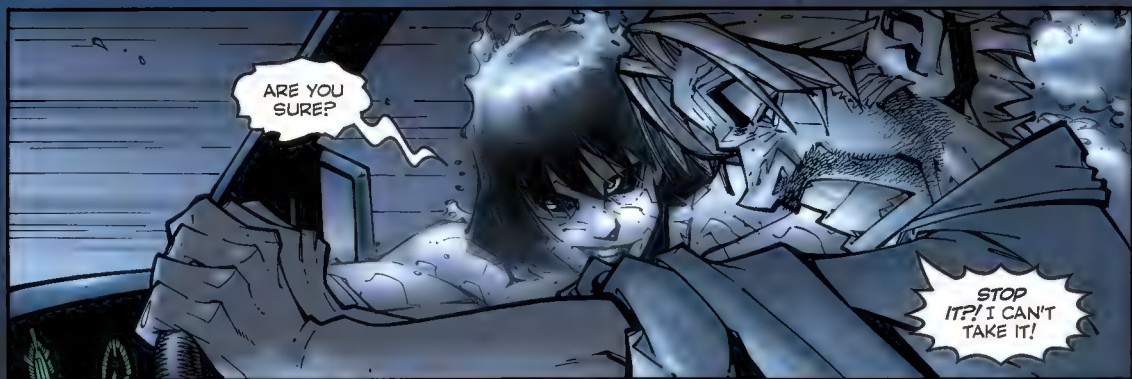


STAY BACK!



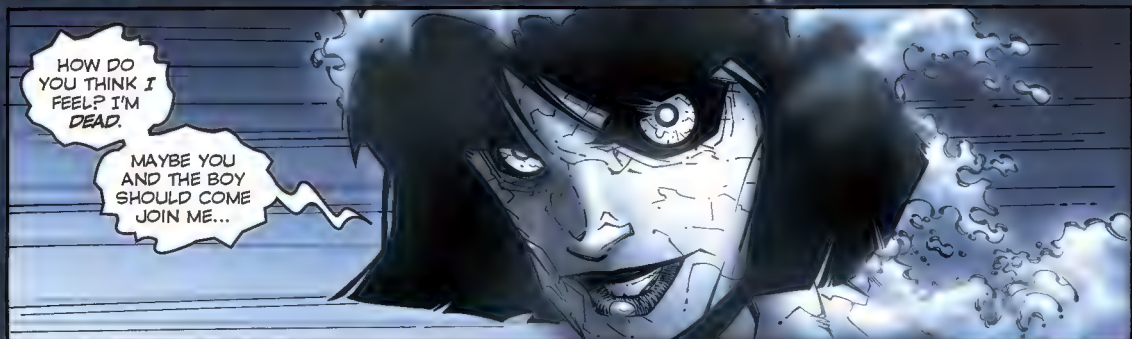






ARE YOU SURE?

STOP IT! I CAN'T TAKE IT!



HOW DO YOU THINK I FEEL? I'M DEAD.

MAYBE YOU AND THE BOY SHOULD COME JOIN ME...



THE BOY. DENNY?

MY GOD... WHAT HAVE I DONE?



WHAT DO YOU EVER DO, FOOL?

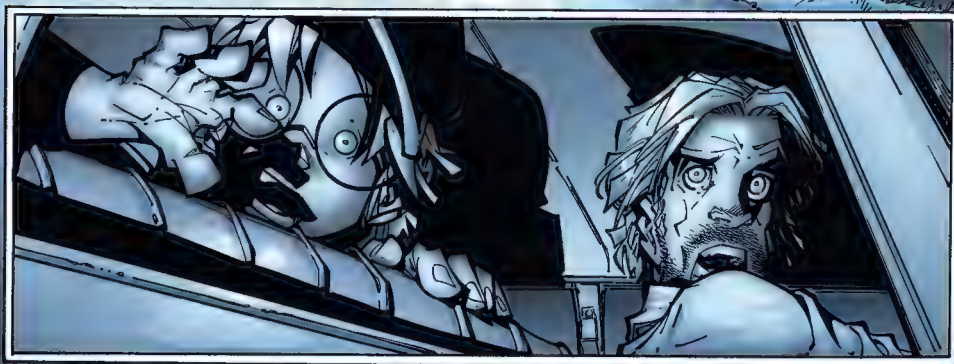


YOU SCREWED UP!

NOW LEAVING STERLING CITY
come again



HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA







CHAPTER TEN

HAUNTS

EIGHT MONTHS AGO
THIS MAN DROVE THIS
VERY ROAD WITH HIS
WIFE AND HIS SON.

NOW HE IS ALONE

...EXCEPT FOR HIS CONSTANT
COMPANIONS; PAIN, FEAR
AND CRUSHING GUILT.

THAT RIDE
ENDED
HORRIBLY.

ONLY HE WALKED AWAY.

DESPERATE TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT
WITH HIS LOST FAMILY, HE GRABBED
A BOY HE THOUGHT WAS HIS SON.

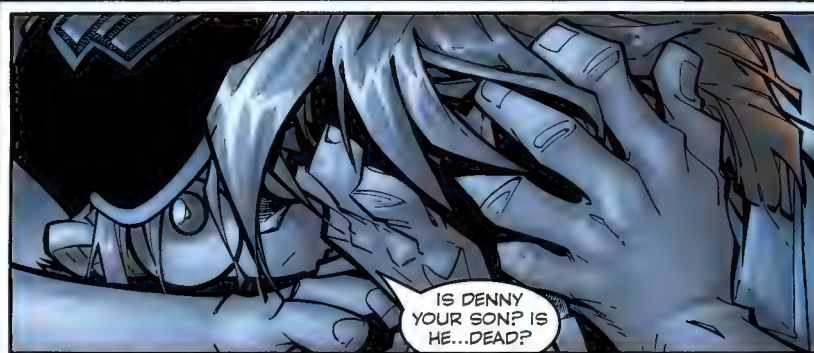
BLINDED BY THE
GHOSTS THAT HAUNT
HIM, HE COULDN'T
SEE THE TRUTH.

TOGETHER THEY
RUSH TOWARD
A RENDEZVOUS
WITH A DESTINY
DEFERRED...

TOWARD A SEEMINGLY
INESCAPABLE RECKONING

HOOONNNKKKKK

SKREEEEEEE RREEEECH

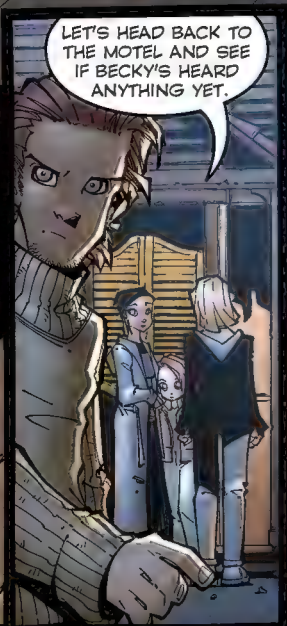




COME ON, ZACH--WE'RE NEVER GONNA FIND MARK ON FOOT...

...THE WHACKO WHO GRABBED HIM TOOK OFF IN A CAR GOING, LIKE, A THOUSAND MILES AN HOUR!

YOU'RE RIGHT, JESS. EVEN IF WE HAD A CAR, WE DON'T KNOW STERLING CITY AT ALL.



LET'S HEAD BACK TO THE MOTEL AND SEE IF BECKY'S HEARD ANYTHING YET.



I KNOW I JUST JOINED UP WITH YOU GUYS, CASEY--BUT I'VE GOT TO SAY THAT YOU SURELY LEAD EXCITING LIVES.

YOU DON'T KNOW THE HALF OF IT, MEGAN...

...NOT HALF...



"I HOPE BECKY'S GOT THE POLICE INVOLVED."



...AND WHAT EXACTLY IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE VICTIM, MA'AM?

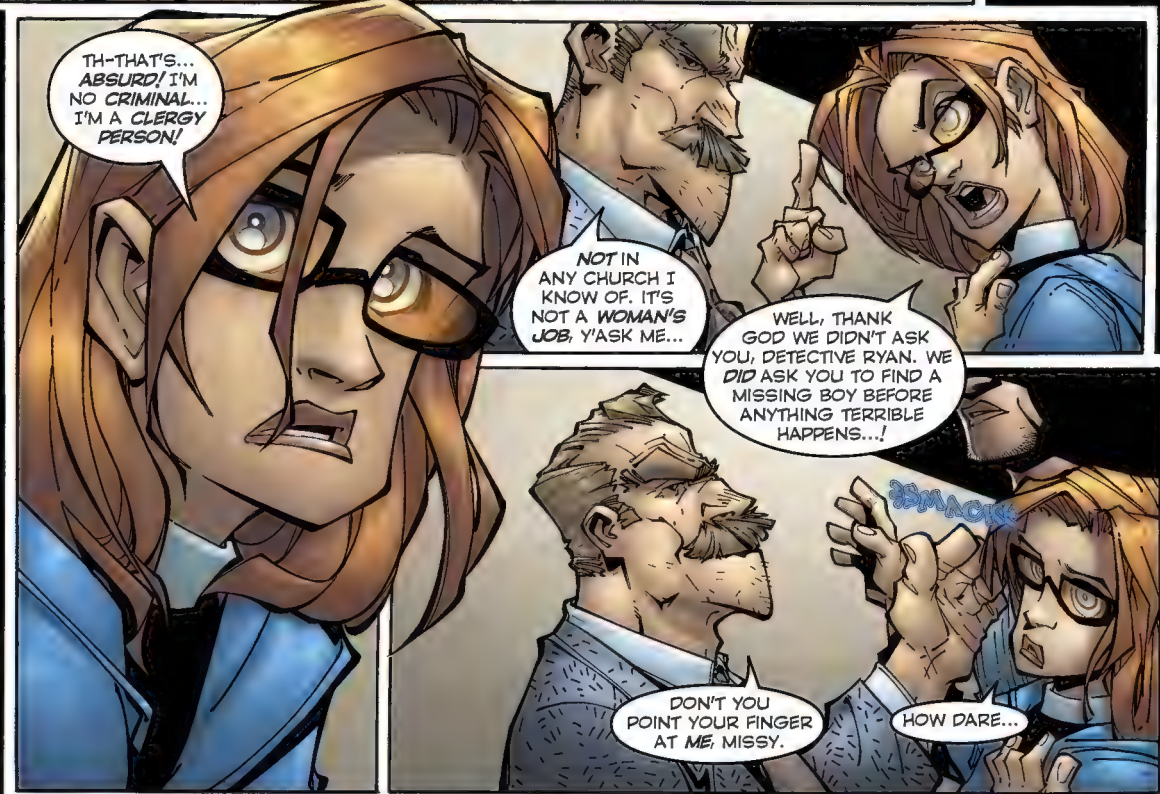
I'M...REBECCA GOODWIN, I'M HIS... **GUARDIAN**. HE'S PART OF...THE YOUTH GROUP FROM MY CHURCH...

LISTEN, WITH ALL RESPECT, WHAT DOES ANY OF THIS HAVE TO DO WITH FINDING THE POOR KID?



WITH **RESPECT**, MA'AM--I NEED SOMETHING TO GO ON.

YOU SAY YOU'RE THE **GUARDIAN**, BUT YOU HAVE **NOTHING** TO PROVE THAT. FOR ALL I KNOW, YOU'RE A **KIDNAPPER**.



TH-THAT'S... **ABSRD!** I'M NO **CRIMINAL**... I'M A **CLERGY PERSON!**

NOT IN ANY CHURCH I KNOW OF. IT'S NOT A **WOMAN'S JOB**, Y'ASK ME...

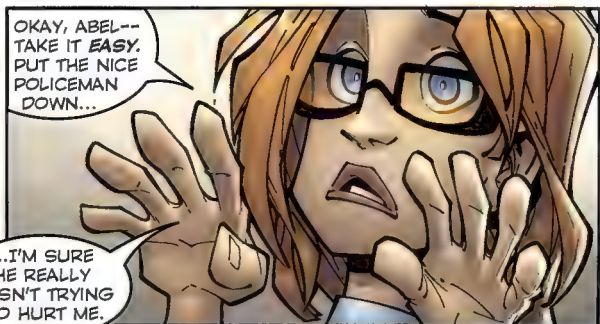
WELL, THANK GOD WE DIDN'T ASK YOU, **DETECTIVE RYAN**. WE DID ASK YOU TO FIND A MISSING BOY BEFORE ANYTHING **TERRIBLE** HAPPENS...!

DON'T YOU POINT YOUR FINGER AT ME, **MISSY**.

HOW DARE...



WH-WHERE
DID 'E COME
FR'M--?!!



OKAY, ABEL--
TAKE IT EASY.
PUT THE NICE
POLICEMAN
DOWN...

...I'M SURE
HE REALLY
WASN'T TRYING
TO HURT ME.

AFTER ALL, WE
KNOW VIOLENCE
NEVER SOLVES
ANYTHING...
RIGHT?



WE'RE ALL
EXTRA TENSE
ABOUT MARK,
AFTER ALL--
I'M SURE THEY
UNDERSTAND...



I'M SURE
THEY'RE NOT
GOING TO HOLD
THIS AGAINST
US...
...RIGHT,
DETECTIVE
RYAN...?



WE'RE
OKAY, GUYS--
REALLY!

WE'LL BE
BACK REALLY
SOON...!



DON'T
COUNT
ON IT...

THIS IS ALL A BIG
MISUNDERSTANDING,
JUST WAIT HERE FOR
US--OKAY?



SHOULDN'T
THEY BE OUT FINDING
MARK INSTEAD OF
BUSTING REVEREND
BECKY?

WHICH IS
WHY THERE'S
NO WAY I'M
STAYING HERE.
WE'VE GOT TO
GO OUT
AGAIN!



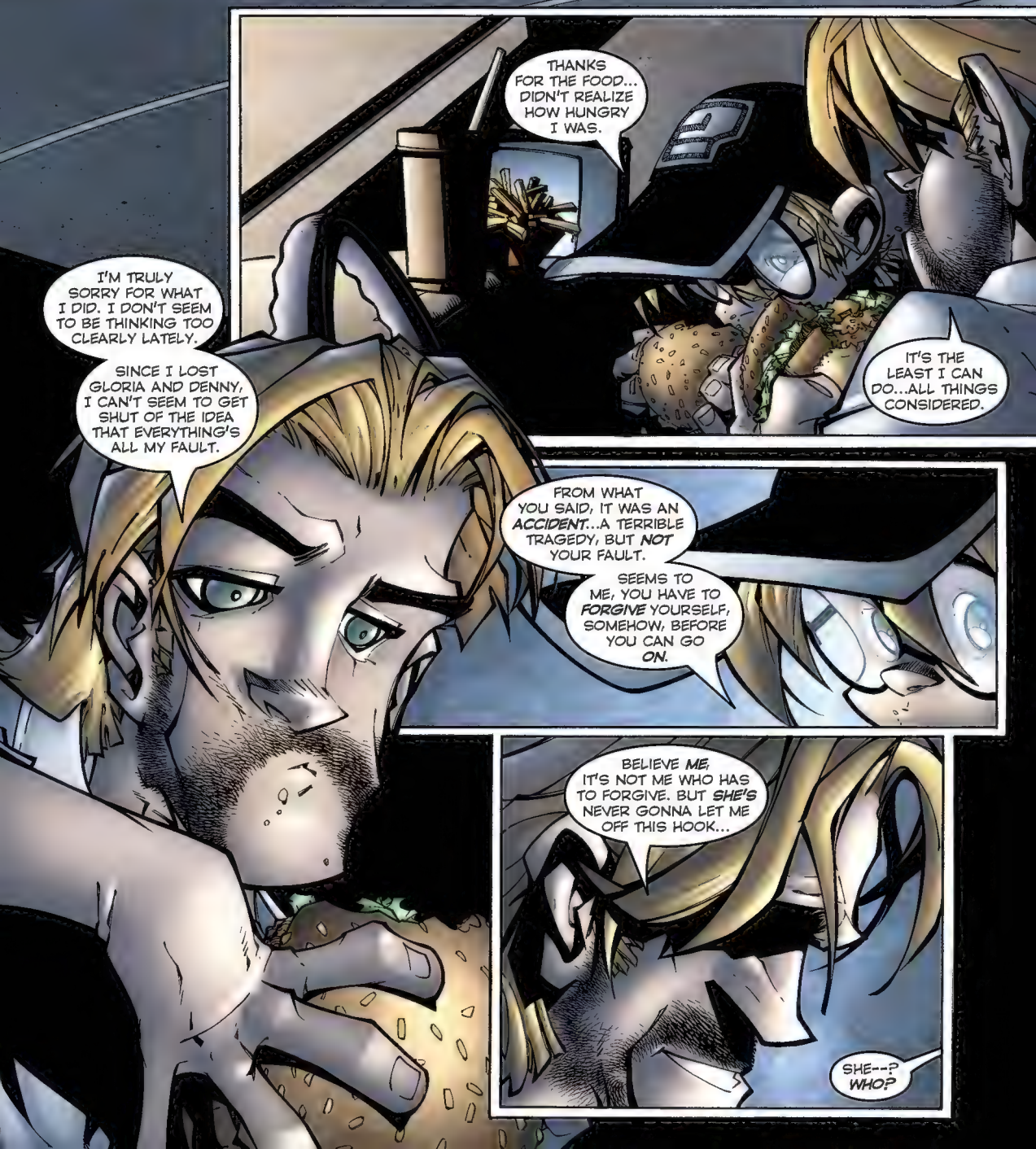
BUT THIS
TIME WE'RE
NOT GOING
ON FOOT.



UURRRKKK

YOU SURE
YOU KNOW HOW
TO DRIVE THIS,
ZACH?

CHUNK



THANKS
FOR THE FOOD...
DIDN'T REALIZE
HOW HUNGRY
I WAS.

I'M TRULY
SORRY FOR WHAT
I DID. I DON'T SEEM
TO BE THINKING TOO
CLEARLY LATELY.

SINCE I LOST
GLORIA AND DENNY,
I CAN'T SEEM TO GET
SHUT OF THE IDEA
THAT EVERYTHING'S
ALL MY FAULT.

IT'S THE
LEAST I CAN
DO...ALL THINGS
CONSIDERED.

FROM WHAT
YOU SAID, IT WAS AN
ACCIDENT...A TERRIBLE
TRAGEDY, BUT NOT
YOUR FAULT.

SEEMS TO
ME, YOU HAVE TO
FORGIVE YOURSELF,
SOMEHOW, BEFORE
YOU CAN GO
ON.

BELIEVE ME,
IT'S NOT ME WHO HAS
TO FORGIVE. BUT SHE'S
NEVER GONNA LET ME
OFF THIS HOOK...

SHE--P
WHOP

Adam and Gloria are in a car. Adam is driving, looking stressed. Gloria is in the passenger seat, looking at him. A large speech bubble from Adam is at the top.

IT'S NOT JUST
MY...*SIN*...THAT HAUNTS
ME, YOU SEE...GLORIA KEEPS
COMING BACK TO MAKE SURE
I KNOW THAT IT WAS
MY FAULT.

Gloria is wearing a black baseball cap and glasses, looking surprised or concerned.

YOUR
WIFE--? WHAT,
HER *GHOST*?

A close-up of Gloria's face, showing her wide eyes and a slightly open mouth, looking very surprised.

I DON'T
THINK I BELIEVE
IN GHOSTS.

'COURSE, ALL THE
STRANGE THINGS I'VE
SEEN LATELY, IT WOULDN'T
SURPRISE ME IF THEY
WERE REAL.

Adam is looking at Gloria with a wide-eyed, intense expression.

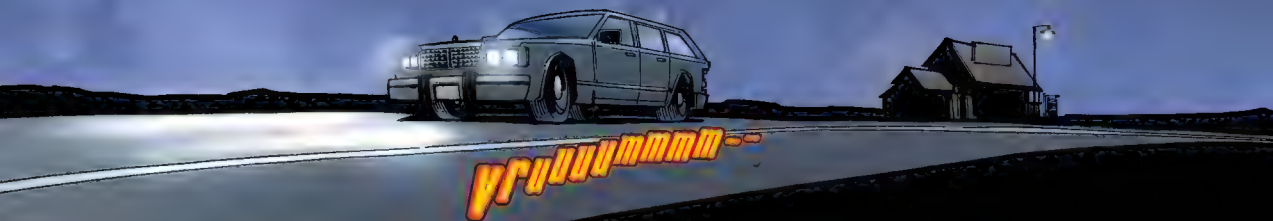
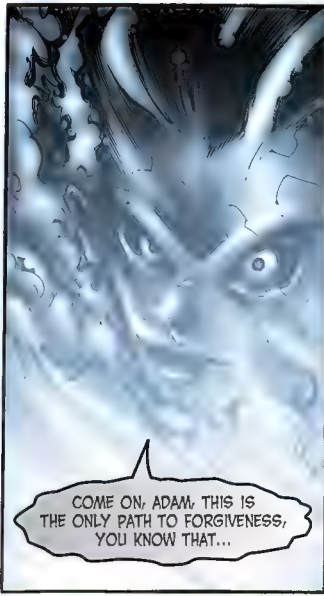
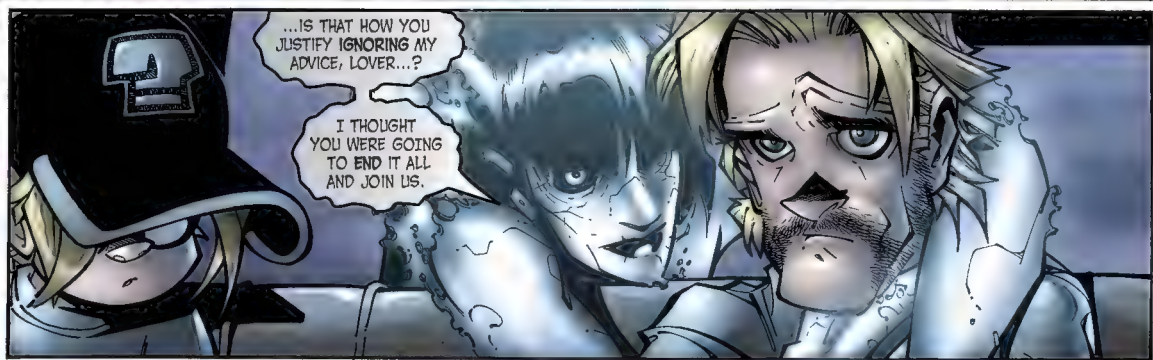
WHATEVER,
THOUGH--I GET...
FEELINGS ABOUT
STUFF, AND *THIS*
DOESN'T FEEL
RIGHT.

MAYBE
YOUR WIFE
ISN'T REALLY
HAUNTING
YOU...?

I...I WISH I
WAS SURE.
OF...
ANYTHING.

Adam's face is shown in a close-up, partially obscured by a large, swirling, storm-like energy field. He looks distressed.

YEAH, ADAM...
MAYBE I'M NOT
HERE...





ZACH...YOU'VE NEVER DRIVEN IT BEFORE, HOW COULD YOU KNOW THAT IT WAS OUT OF GAS...?

LOOKA! THIS, SOMEONE'S A LONG WAY FROM SCHOOL.

YOU RIGHT, JOE. WHAT D'YA THINK THESE UPTOWNERS WANT HERE?

I THINK THE LADIES CAME HERE TO MEET US...

RIGHT, WHO'D SUSPECT THAT A RED ARROW POINTING TO "E" MEANS EMPTY?

...SO WE COULD TEACH 'EM WHAT THE WORLD REALLY IS.

GOOD EVENING, LADIES... YOU'RE JUST IN TIME FOR A PARTY.

YEAH, AND THREE OF YA! MEANS LESS SHARING.

NOW HOLD IT...!

YOU HOLD IT, L'I'L BRO.

OOOF-!!



LEAVE THEM ALONE!!



I SAID--?!
HOW?

HEY?!



HEY--
THE KID
ACED
JOEY!

YOU
LITTLE
SH--!

?

FANCY FOOT-
WORK WON'T SAVE
YOU FOREV--

--MY KNIFE?
WHERE'S MY
KNIFE?!

I'M NOT
SURE HOW...
BUT IT'S RIGHT
HERE.



NOW, IT'S GONE.



THAT KID ISN'T HUMAN-- NO ONE MOVES THAT FAST!

I DON'T CARE HOW FAST HE IS, WE GOTTA--

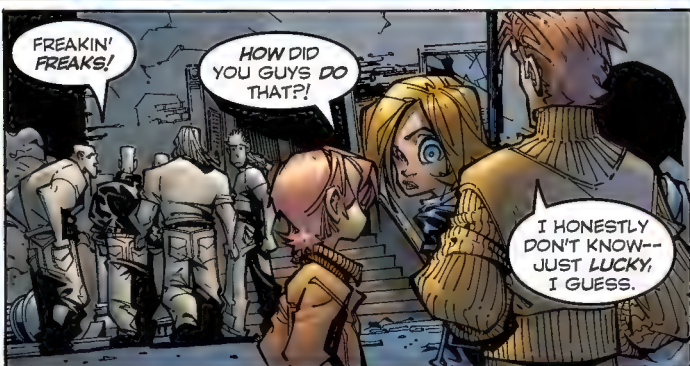


--LEAVE 'EM ALONE AND GET OUTTA HERE...



WHAD' YOU DO TO TONY?
CALL IT...PASSIVE RESISTANCE.

KEEP IT THE HELL AWAY FROM ME!



FREAKIN' FREAKS!

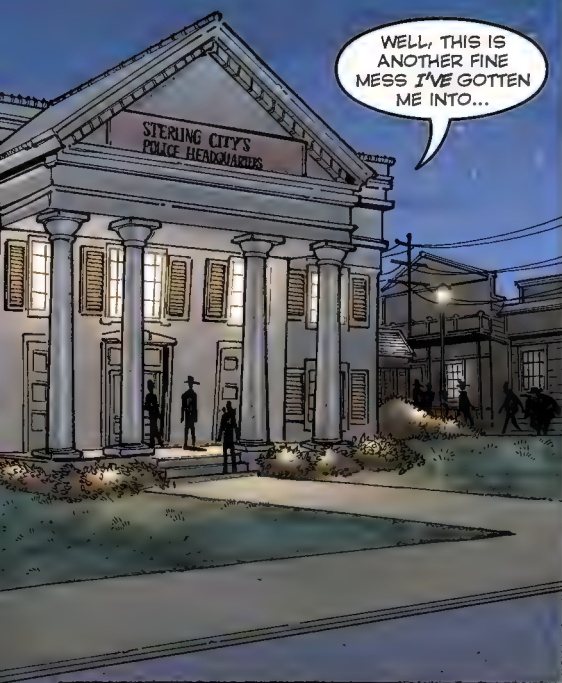
HOW DID YOU GUYS DO THAT?!

I HONESTLY DON'T KNOW-- JUST LUCKY, I GUESS.



OR BLESSED.

NOW WE BETTER GET BACK TO LOOKING FOR MARK...?



WELL, THIS IS ANOTHER FINE MESS I'VE GOTTEN ME INTO...



...I LET THAT LUMMOX PUSH EVERY ONE OF MY BUTTONS. I STILL HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO TILL I GROW INTO MY LIFE.

I JUST HOPE THEY'RE ACTUALLY LOOKING FOR MARK.



HELLO, DETECTIVE RYAN, THIS IS A SURPRISE.

YEAH. WELL, YOU'RE...FREE TO GO.



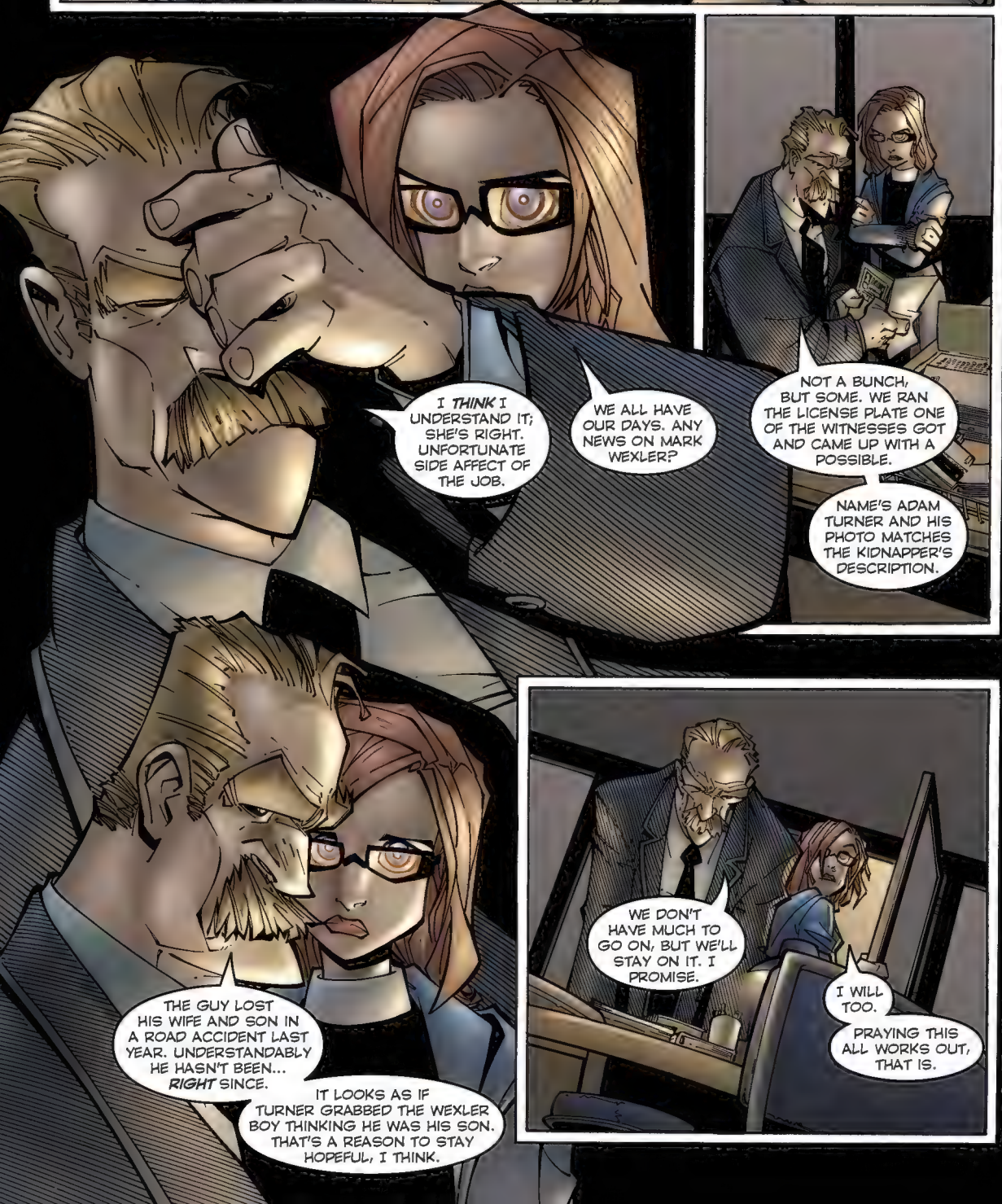
AH, THERE SHE IS! I TRUST REVEREND GOODWIN WAS WELL CARED FOR, DETECTIVE RYAN...?

YES, UM... BISHOP JOHNSON.



NOW THEN, LET'S GET THESE CHARGES DROPPED--- THE RECORD EXPUNGED--- LET'S GO, PEOPLE!

BISHOP JOHNSON IS YOUR LOCAL SUPERIOR. I THOUGHT SHE'D RELISH REVISING THE OFFICER'S CLERGY STEREOTYPE PERSONALLY.





--HUNNNNNH!

WHAT DID YOU DREAM?

MARK'S IN DANGER--ON A RUSTY OLD BRIDGE!

GOOD THING WE GOT GAS, THEN...

"...THERE'S AN 'OLD IRON
BRIDGE' ON THE MAP."

BRIDGE
CLOSED
KEEP OFF

STOP



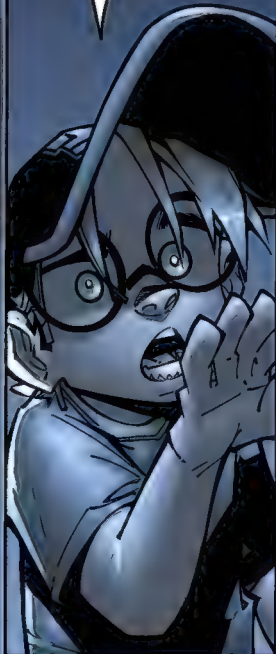
DON'T DO
THIS, MISTER...THIS
ISN'T WHAT YOUR SON
WOULD WANT...!

GO AWAY...GET
TO SAFETY, SON. I HAVE
TO DO THIS TO MAKE UP
FOR MY SIN...



THE ACCIDENT WASN'T
YOUR FAULT! NO ONE BUT
YOU THINKS IT WAS!

YOUR WIFE
AND SON ARE IN A
BETTER PLACE, THEY
DON'T CONDEMN
YOU!



I WISH
I COULD
BELIEVE...

DON'T
BELIEVE IT, IDIOT--
IT'S NOT TRUE.



THERE IS NO
'BETTER PLACE.' YOU
SENT US TO A HELL OF
ETERNAL DARKNESS...
AND SUFFERING.





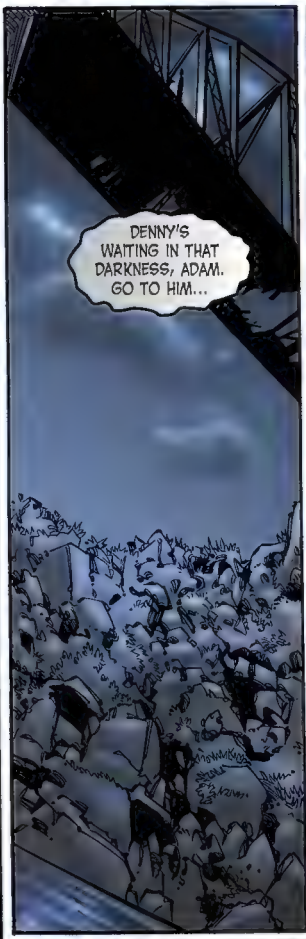
THE ONLY WAY
TO ATONE IS TO JOIN US IN
THAT UNENDING BLACKNESS...
COME ON, ADAM...

ATONE...
YES...

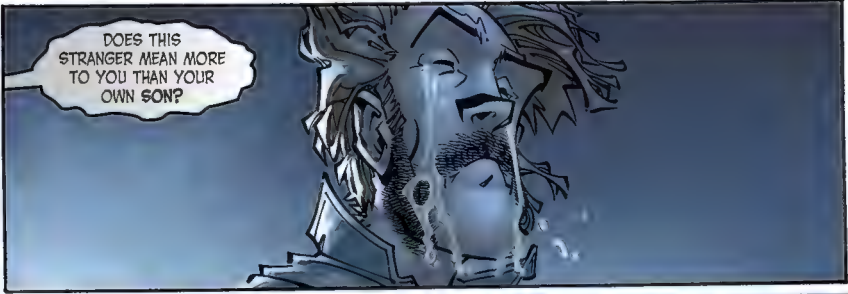


NO ONE
WANTS YOU TO
JUMP, SIR--THERE'S
NOTHING FOR YOU
TO ATONE FOR !

COME BACK,
PLEASE...!



DENNY'S
WAITING IN THAT
DARKNESS, ADAM.
GO TO HIM...



DOES THIS
STRANGER MEAN MORE
TO YOU THAN YOUR
OWN SON?



NO!
KILLING YOURSELF WON'T
SOLVE ANYTHING!



WHEN YOU
DIE, SO WILL YOUR
MEMORY OF DENNY!
HE NEEDS YOU
TO LIVE ON!



THERE THEY
ARE--JUST LIKE
MY DREAM!



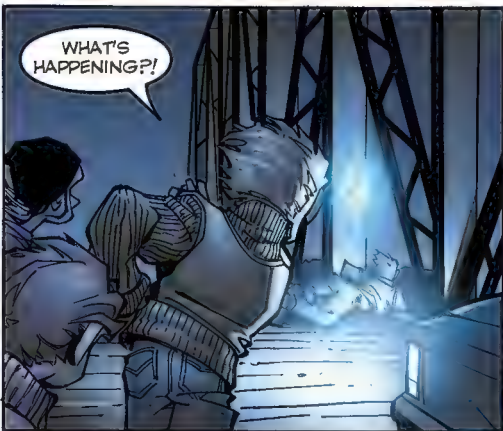
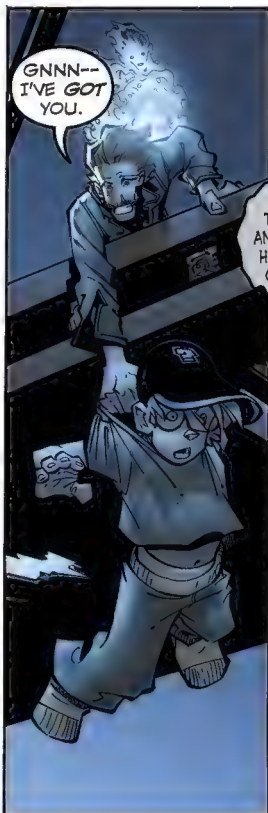
I HADN'T
THOUGHT OF
THAT. I DO HAVE
A DUTY...

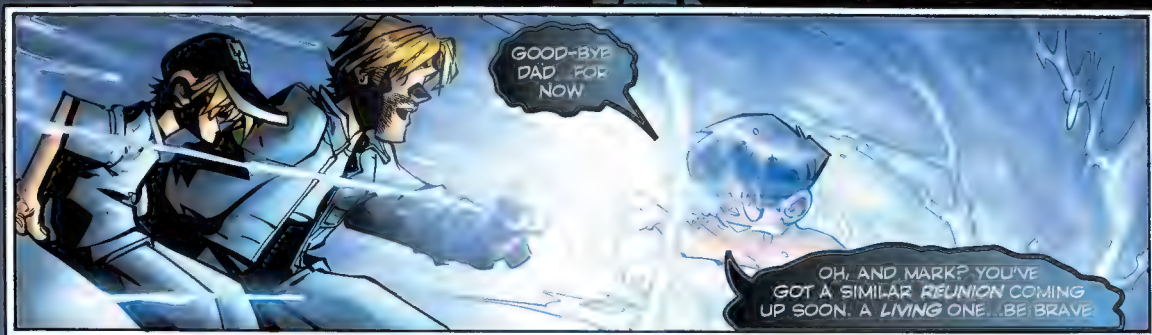


NO---!



MY...
GOD!





"TH-THANK YOU."





CHAPTER ELEVEN

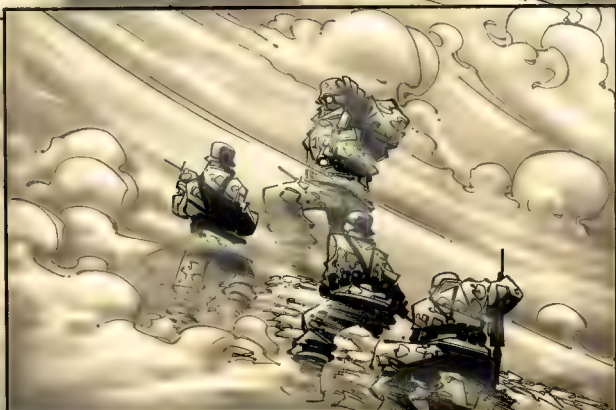
CHASING SHADOWS



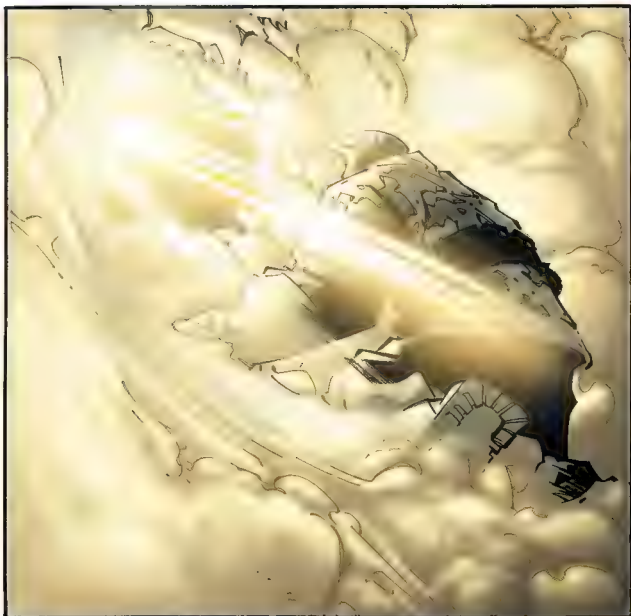
OPERATION DESERT
STORM, JUNE, 1991.

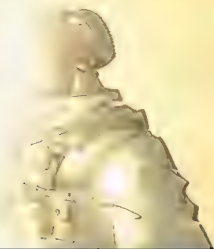
SOMEWHERE IN THE
SYRIAN DESERT.

LOST.

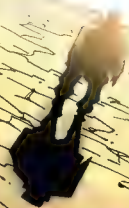








HE NEVER SPOKE OF WHAT
HAPPENED THAT LOST DAY
IN THE DESERT.



IN FACT, THOUGH NO MEDICAL
REASON COULD BE FOUND, HE
NEVER SPOKE AT ALL, AGAIN.



BUT IN HIS HEART, ABEL SIMMS
REJOICED, FOR HIS LIFE'S PURPOSE
HAD BEEN REVEALED TO HIM.





DREAMS.

THEY SURE ARE
RICHER OUT HERE,
AIN'T THEY?



THAT'S WHY A
LOT OF US LIVE HERE,
YOU KNOW.

THE HARMONIC
VIBRATIONS ARE
SAID TO BE EXTRA
STRONG IN THESE
PARTS.



WELL, DUDLEY
AND I ARE OFF
FOR OUR BEAUTY
SLEEP. PLEASANT
DREAMS...

WELL, I'M
GLAD SOMEONE
CAN SLEEP.



ABEL? ARE
YOU AWAKE?

IT'S ME,
BECKY GOODWIN?
REMEMBER?



WE'RE IN ALMA,
NEW MEXICO. HOME
OF THE DESERT SOUL
FESTIVAL, WHICH
BEGINS TOMORROW.
REMEMBER?

WHY
EXACTLY, I
COULDN'T
TELL YOU.



THESE POOR
KIDS LOST THEIR
FAMILIES, THEIR ENTIRE
TOWN, EVERYTHING...
AND I'M RUNNING THEM
AROUND THE SOUTH-
WEST CHASING
SHADOWS.



I PROMISED
TO HELP THEM
FIND EVERYTHING
AGAIN. BUT HOW?
WE'RE GETTING
NOWHERE.



SOMEHOW,
I THINK WE MIGHT
FINALLY GET SOME
ANSWERS AT THIS
FESTIVAL...I JUST
HOPE IT'S NOT
ANOTHER DRY
HOLE.

WELCOME
DESERT
SOUL
SEARCHERS
THE SPIRIT
GATHERING
EVENT OF
THE NEW AGE

FOR A PERSON
OF THE CLOTH, I FIND
MYSELF IN SOME PRETTY
NON-CHURCHY
PLACES.

BUT A NEW-AGE
CRYSTAL SWAP IS THE LAST
PLACE MY SEMINARY PROFS
WOULD EXPECT ME TO
WIND UP.

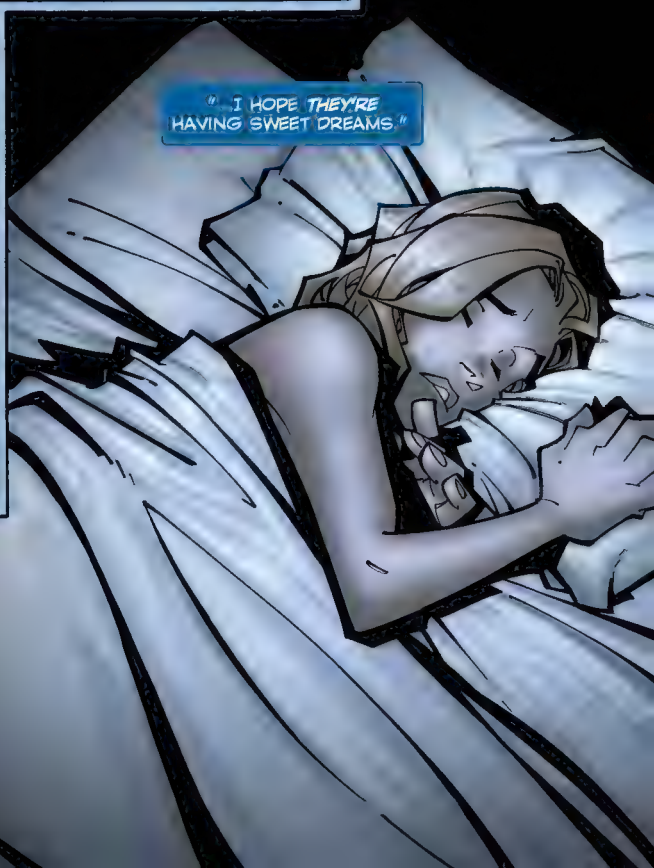




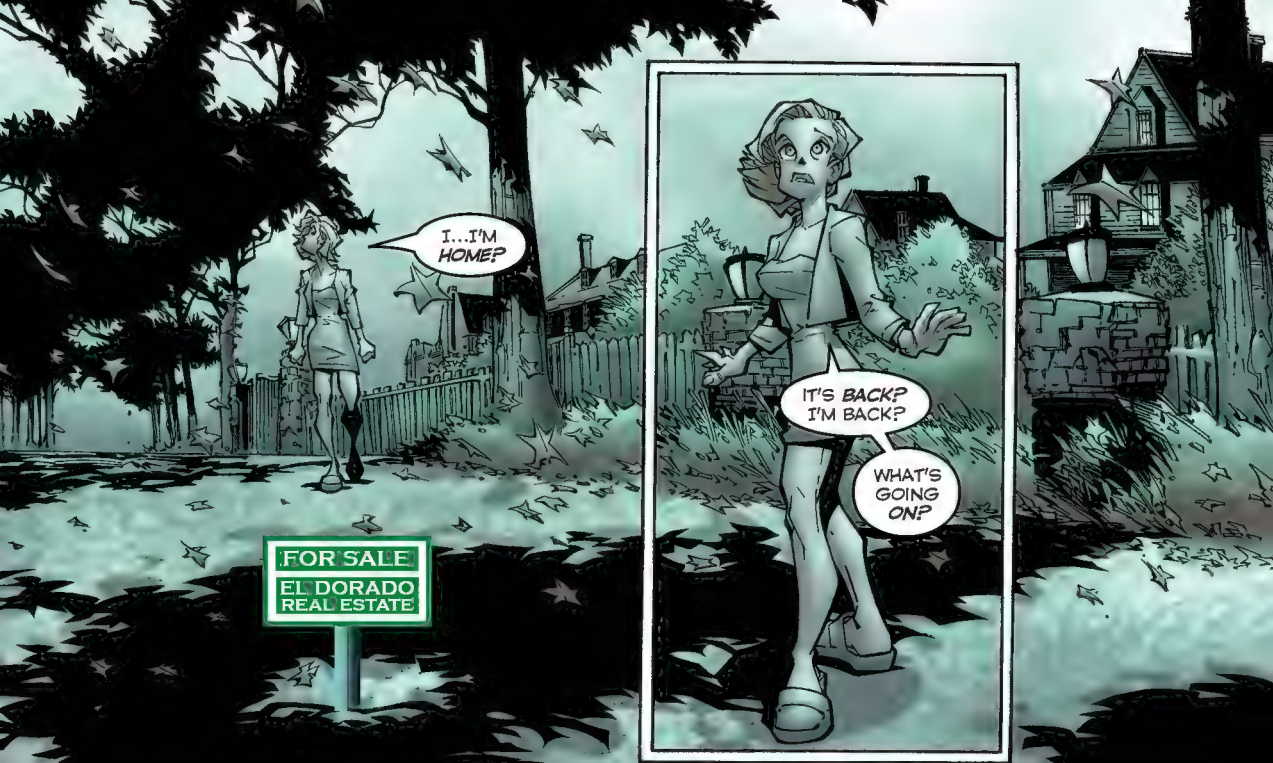
WELL, LET'S TRY TO GET SOME SLEEP--AND THIS TIME, STAY IN YOUR BED, OKAY?



GOODNIGHT, ABEL, KEEP AN EAR OUT FOR THE KIDS, HMM...?



"I HOPE THEY'RE HAVING SWEET DREAMS."



I...I'M HOME?

FOR SALE
EL DORADO
REAL ESTATE



IT'S BACK?
I'M BACK?

WHAT'S
GOING
ON?



WHAT'S
WRONG,
PUMPKIN?

WHO...?



DADDY---?!
I THOUGHT YOU
WERE...

DEAD? I
AM. BUT THIS
IS A DREAM,
SWEETIE.

YOU'RE
TURNING INTO A
BEAUTIFUL WOMAN,
CASEY. JUST LIKE
YOUR MOTHER.



AND I'M
REAL PROUD OF
YOU AND YOUR
FRIENDS...

...YOU
STOPPED
THOSE INVADING
MONSTERS
STONE-COLD!



I TRIED, AND
THEY HAD MY OWN
BLASTED DEPUTY
KILL ME OFF.



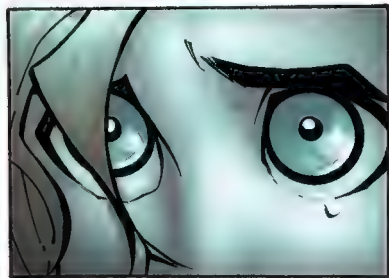
BUT ENOUGH
OF THAT...HE GOT
HIS TOO.

I DON'T HAVE
A LOT OF TIME, I
JUST WANTED TO TELL
YOU SOMETHING,
PUMPKIN...

THIS ISN'T
OVER YET, CASEY.
THERE'S STILL A WAR
TO BE WON.



TO SAVE
E-D CITY, YOU'RE
GOING TO HAVE
TO TAKE IT TO THE
DEMON'S OWN
DOORSTEP.



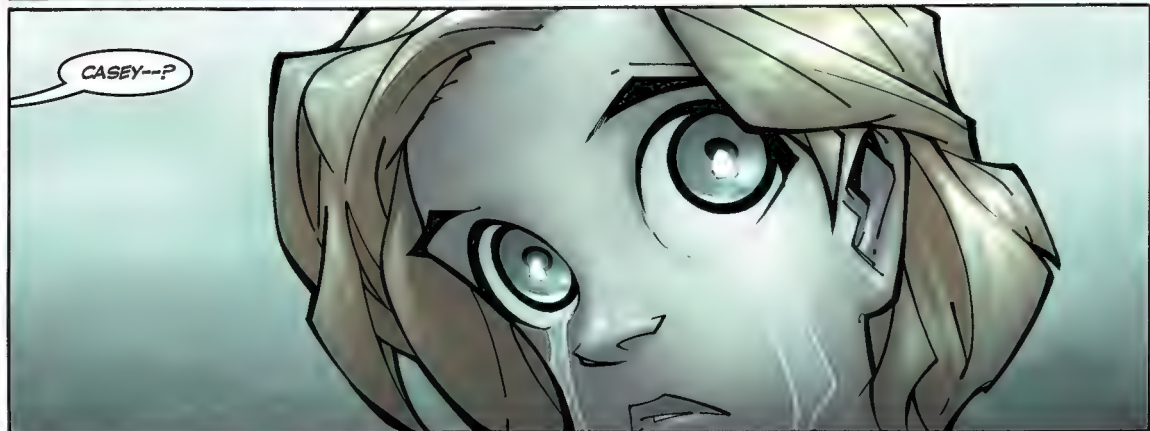
YOU HAVE
MY NOTEBOOKS, THE
CODED STUFF? I COPIED
DOWN STUFF I HEARD
THEM...*CHANTING*. IT
MAY BE USEFUL.

THAT'S IT,
DARLING. I LOVE
YOU, TELL YOUR MOM
I LOVE HER TOO.
BYE NOW...

DADDY--
NO!



DADDY,
WHERE ARE
YOU--?!
WHERE IS...
ANYBODY?



CASEY--P



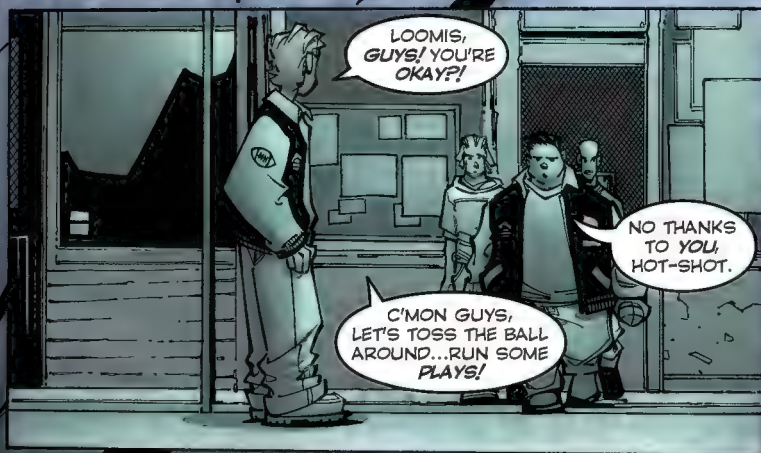
CASEY...?



CASEY...?

MARK...?

JESS...?



LOOMIS,
GUYS! YOU'RE
OKAY?!

NO THANKS
TO YOU,
HOT-SHOT.

C'MON GUYS,
LET'S TOSS THE BALL
AROUND...RUN SOME
PLAYS!



YOU AIN'T
QB ANYMORE,
MULLINS. YOU QUIT
US, REMEMBER?

YOU AN'
YOUR NEW FRIENDS
HAD TO GO OFF AND
SAVE THE TOWN.
REMEMBER?

WE DID!

SEEMS TO ME
THAT PASS WAS
INCOMPLETE,
CAP'N...





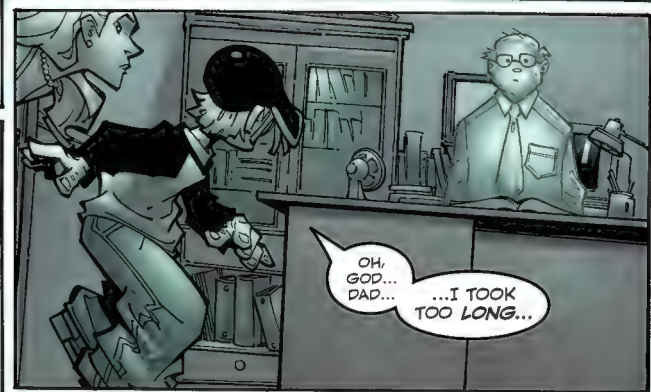


AND, MOM--WE
REALLY NEED YOU
WITH US NOW!



DAD!

YOU'LL
NEVER GUESS
WHO I--
DAD?!



OH,
GOD...
DAD...
...I TOOK
TOO LONG...



MOM...
WE HAVE
TO...

MOM?!!

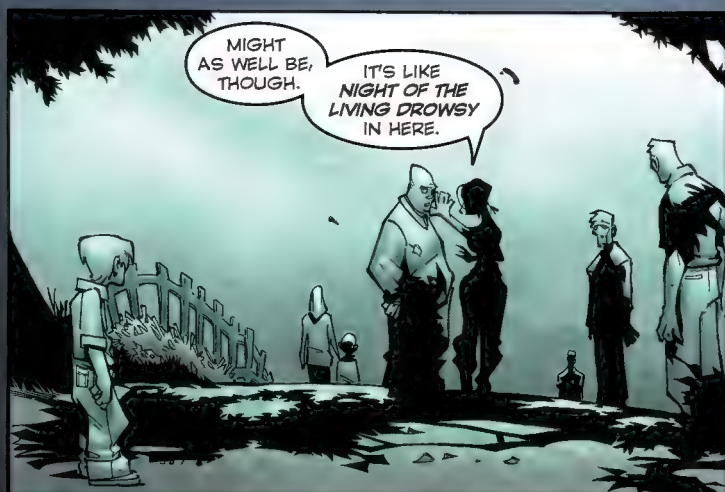
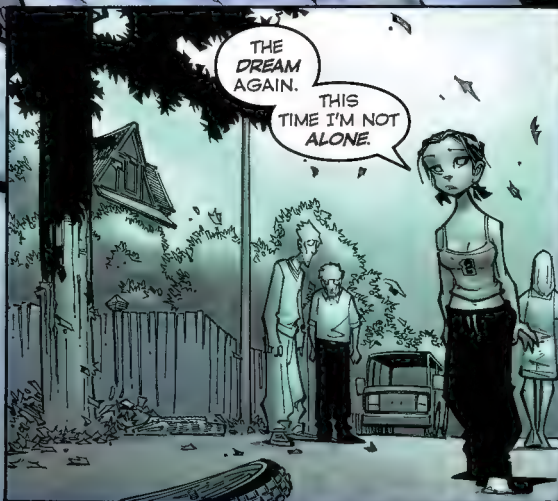


MOM--COME
BACK, WE NEED
YOU! MOM!!



WHAT--?!

CASEY--?





WAIT...
SOMEONE'S
MOVING OVER
THERE!



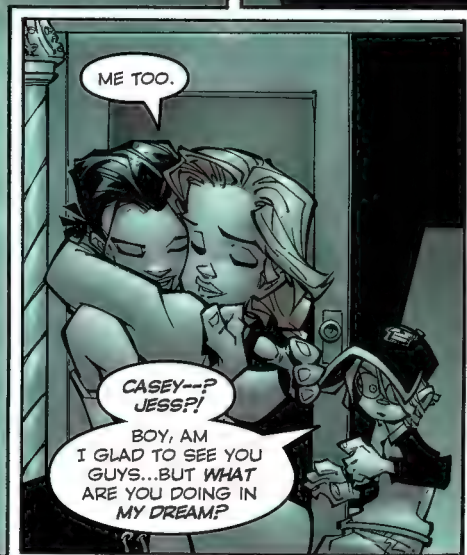
HELLO--P!

HEY?!
WAIT UP!!



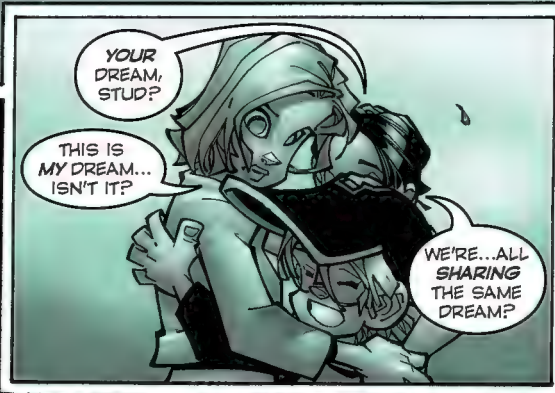
CASEY--P

JESS?!
THANK GOD,
I WAS SO
SCARED...



ME TOO.

CASEY--P
JESS?!
BOY, AM
I GLAD TO SEE YOU
GUYS...BUT WHAT
ARE YOU DOING IN
MY DREAM?



YOUR
DREAM,
STUD?

THIS IS
MY DREAM...
ISN'T IT?

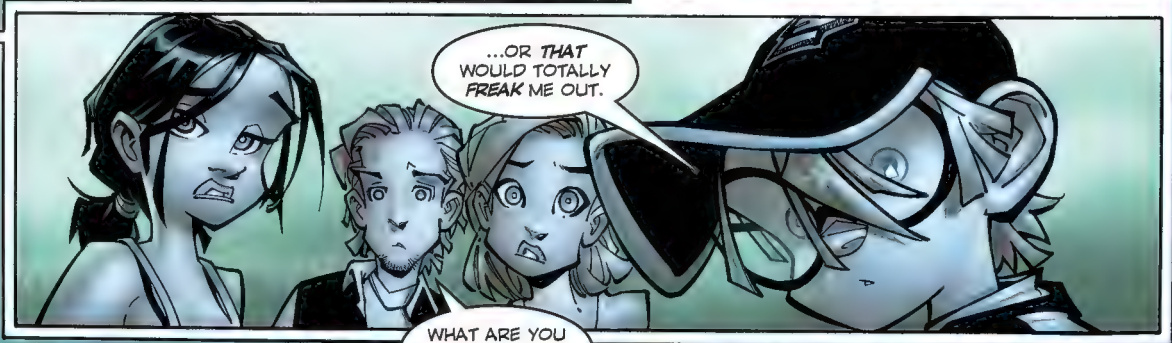
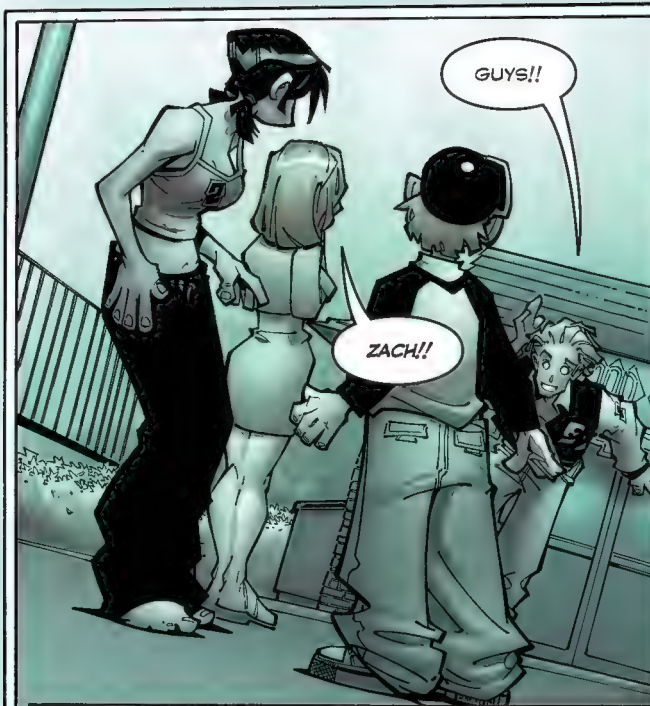
WE'RE...ALL
SHARING
THE SAME
DREAM?



THAT'S
NUTS!

NO MORE SO
THAN ANYTHING
ELSE LATELY.

HEY--P!
WAIT!





DRAEDALUS!!

GREETINGS,
OH WORTHY
ADVERSARIES.

I TRUST
YOU'VE ENJOYED
YOUR LITTLE TRIP
DOWN MEMORY
LANE...

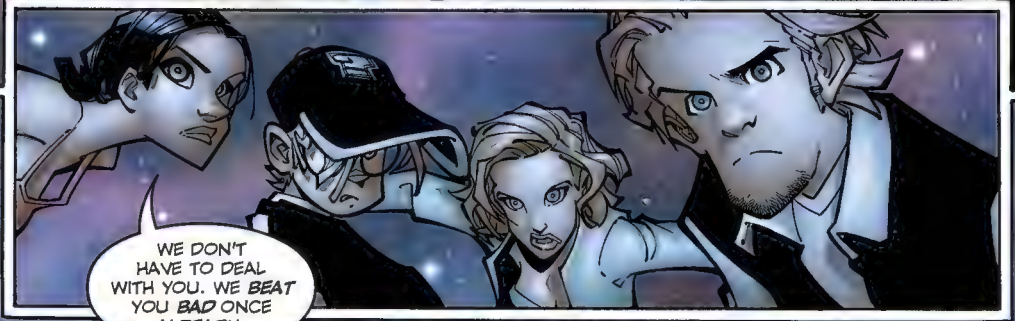


THEY'RE
ALL ALIVE; YOU
KNOW.

THEY ARE
MINE.

I HAVE NO
INTEREST IN THEIR
COMING TO HARM. I
WILL GIVE THEM BACK
TO YOU.

FOR A
PRICE.



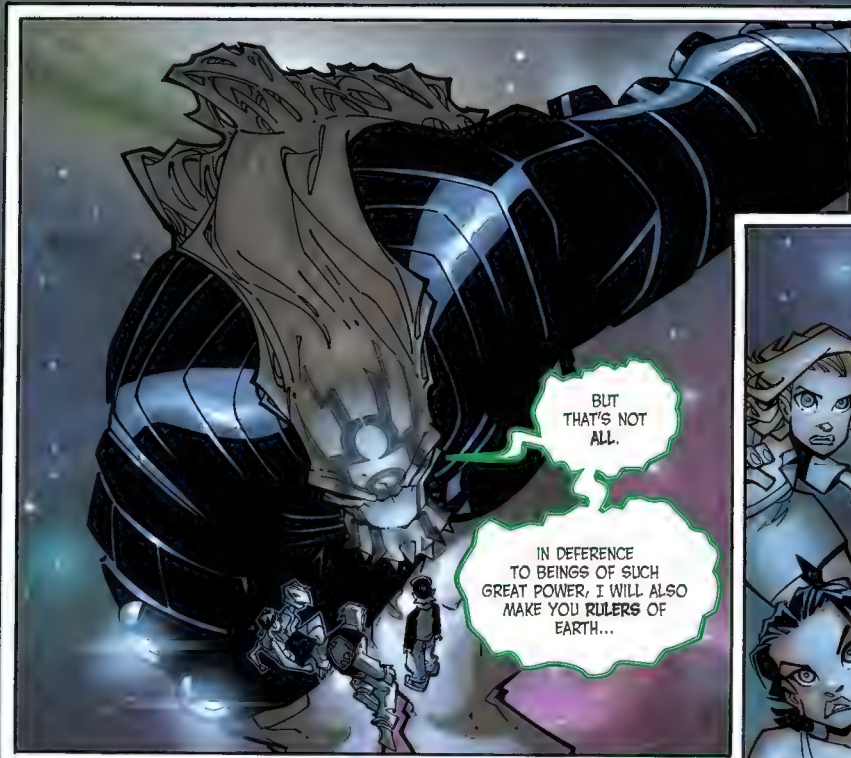
WE DON'T
HAVE TO DEAL
WITH YOU. WE BEAT
YOU *BAD* ONCE
ALREADY.



INDEED, I AM HUMBLLED BY
YOUR GREAT POWER. I KNOW
WHEN I'VE MET MY MATCH.

THAT IS WHY IT
IS I WHO WISHES A
DEAL WITH YOU.

I WILL GIVE
YOU YOUR *HEART'S*
DESIRE. I WILL GIVE
YOU BACK ALL THAT
YOU HAVE LOST...



BUT
THAT'S NOT
ALL.

IN DEFERENCE
TO BEINGS OF SUCH
GREAT POWER, I WILL ALSO
MAKE YOU RULERS OF
EARTH...



...ALL YOU
HAVE TO DO IS
BOW DOWN
BEFORE ME.

DON'T BE
HASTY. THINK
IT THROUGH.

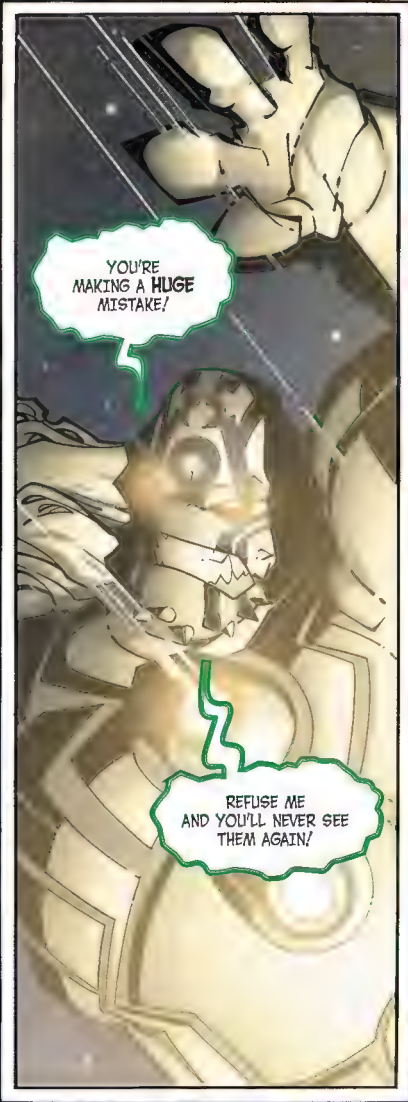
WHAT ARE YOU
PREPARED TO
SACRIFICE?

WHAT
WILL YOU
DO?



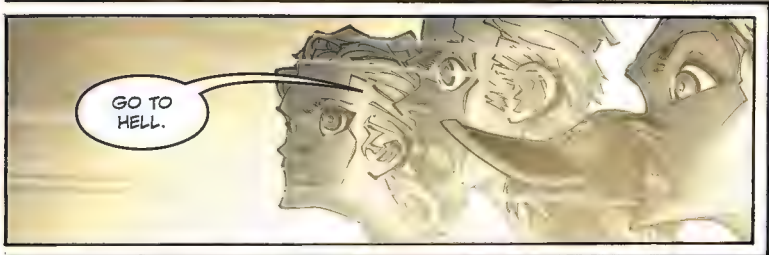


WHAT ARE YOU
DOING--?!



YOU'RE
MAKING A HUGE
MISTAKE!

REFUSE ME
AND YOU'LL NEVER SEE
THEM AGAIN!

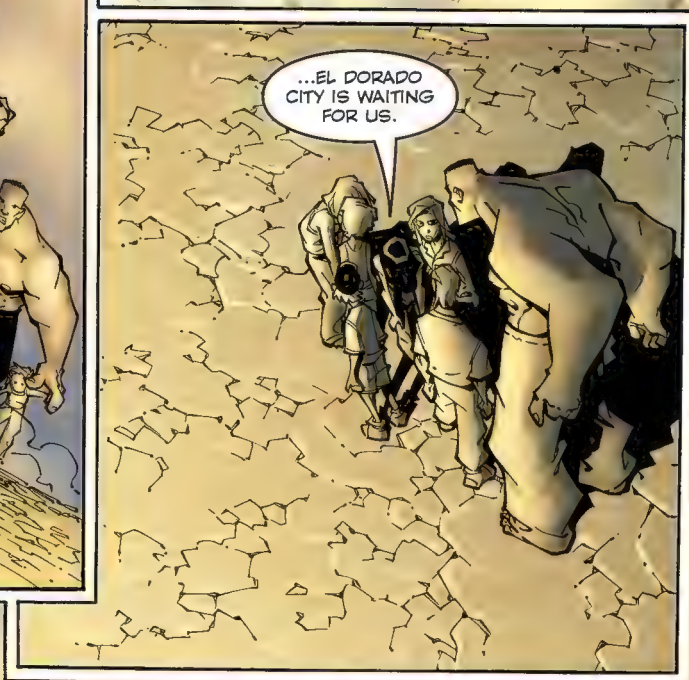
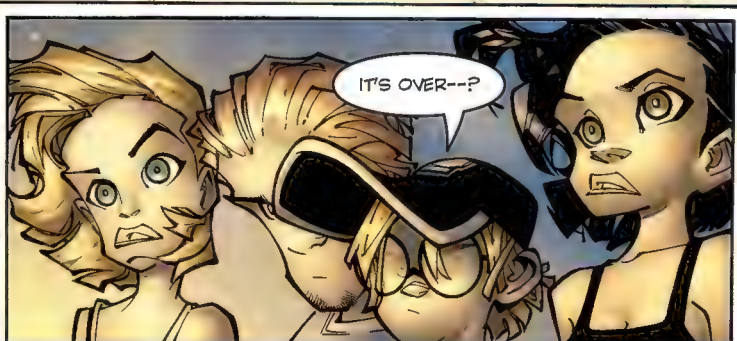


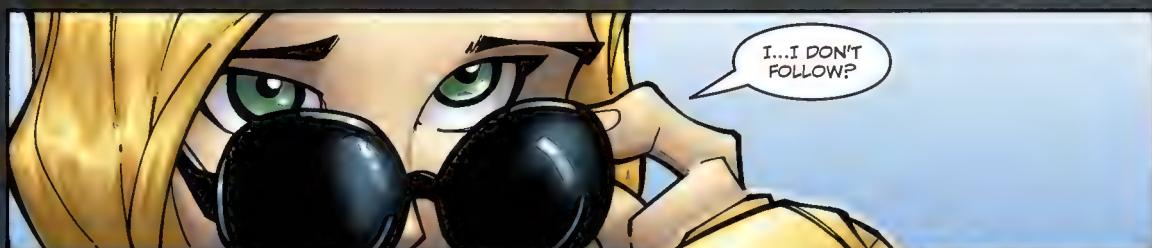
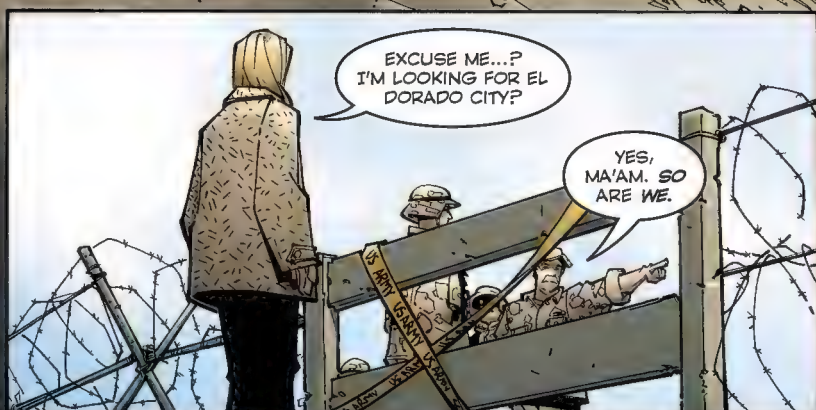
GO TO
HELL..



NOOOOOOOO!!!

FWAAAAASSSH







CHAPTER TWELVE

WHERE THE HEART IS



ALMA, NEW MEXICO.

...WEIRDEST
DREAMS LAST
NIGHT.

YEAH, ME
TOO!

PACOS CANTINA

MY MOM WOULD SAY THAT
THE "VIBE" HERE IS "CONDUCTIVE"
TO PSYCHIC "RECEPTIVITY." HENCE,
OUR *SHARED DREAM*.

AND WHAT I WOULDN'T
GIVE TO GO BACK TO THE TIME
WHEN I THOUGHT THAT WAS JUST
NEW-AGEY CLAPTRAP...

I'D GIVE
ANYTHING TO
SEE MOM...

YOU WILL, JESS...
WE'RE GOING TO FIND
EL DORADO CITY...
AND ALL OUR LOVED
ONES AGAIN...

HOW? WE'VE
CHASED ALL OVER
THE SOUTHWEST
THESE PAST MONTHS
AND WE'RE EXACTLY
NOWHERE.

IN MY DREAM...
BEFORE WE "MET,"
I SAW MY DAD...
OR HIS GHOST I
GUESS...

...ANYWAY, HE
REMINDS ME THAT I
HAVE THE JOURNAL THAT
HE KEPT WHILE SPYING ON
DRAEDALUS' CULT BACK IN
EL DORADO CITY...



...INCLUDING
THE **INCANTATIONS** THEY
USED TO **SUMMON** DRAEPALUS
FROM HIS DIMENSION.

THEN, MAYBE
WE CAN USE IT TO
FIND A WAY TO WHEREVER
THAT DEMON IS KEEPING
OUR FAMILIES AND
FRIENDS...!

MAYBE,
ZACH...

...ONCE WE
FIGURE OUT HOW
TO **READ** IT. DAD
USED SOME SORT
OF CODE...

LIKE WE KNOW HOW
TO DO THAT. ARE WE
CRYPTOGRAPHERS?

ARE WE **DEMON
FIGHTERS?** THE
NORMAL RULES ARE
ALL OUT THE WINDOW--WE
WILL FIGURE THIS OUT.

WE CAN'T GIVE
UP--THERE **HAS**
TO BE A WAY...

...
...WONDER
WHAT REVEREND
BECKY AND MEGAN
ARE DOING AT THE
FAIR...



SO...INTERESTING
STUFF, EH, MEGAN?

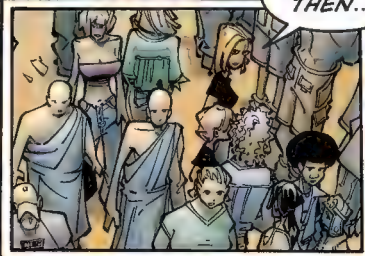
AND *WEIRD*.
DON'T TELL ME A
CHURCH-TYPE LIKE YOU
IS INTO ANY OF THIS
BIZARRO JUNK
N'STUFF?

IT'S ALL
SO...SO...*OUT*
THERE!



WHAT ISN'T...
LATELY? I'M NOT SURE
I BELIEVED IN THE MORE
SUPERNATURAL ASPECTS
OF MY *OWN* FAITH WHEN
I GRADUATED FROM
SEMINARY...

...WELL,
THAT WAS
THEN...



NOT SURE
IF I'M READY FOR
FAIRIES YET,
THOUGH...

BUT IF
IT TAKES FAIRIES,
CRYSTALS, UNICORNS
OR AROMATHERAPY--IN
ADDITION TO *PRAYER*--
TO HELP THESE
KIDS...

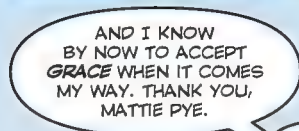
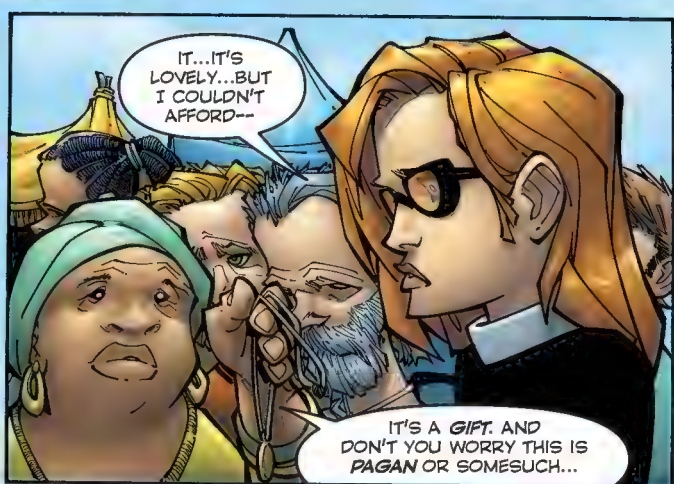
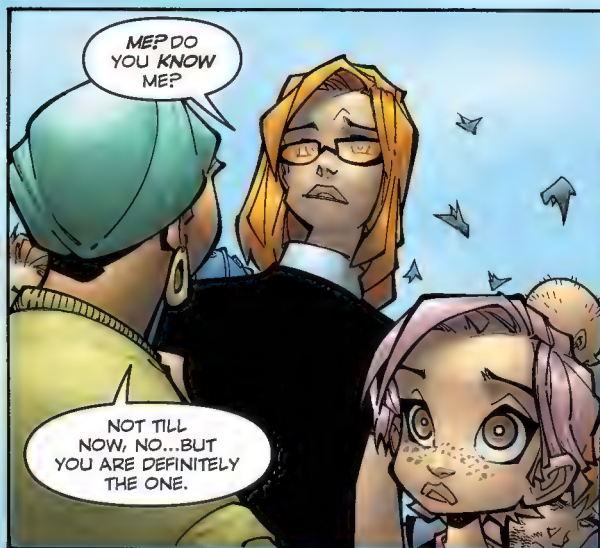


...BRING
IT ON.

'SCUSE ME,
PASTOR...?

YES...?

MY NAME IS
MATTIE PYE...AND
I JUST *HAD* TO
MEET YOU.



ABEL SIMMS NEVER SPEAKS.
PERHAPS IT IS THAT HE
CAN'T SPEAK.

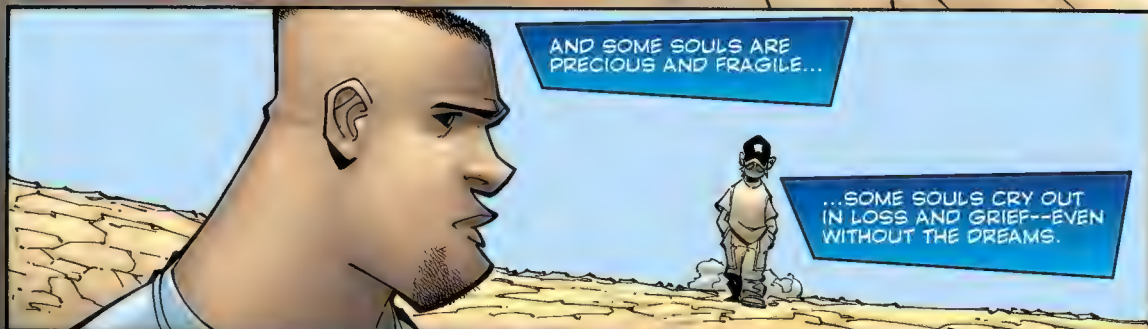
EVEN HE DOESN'T
REALLY KNOW.

BUT IF HE SPOKE, COULD HE
PUT VOICE TO THE UNEASE
HE FEELS IN THIS PLACE?

ALMA IS A PSYCHIC NEXUS
OF SOME SORT--DREAMS
ARE RICHER, DEEPER HERE...



...BUT THESE DREAMS
DISTURB THE SOUL.



AND SOME SOULS ARE
PRECIOUS AND FRAGILE...

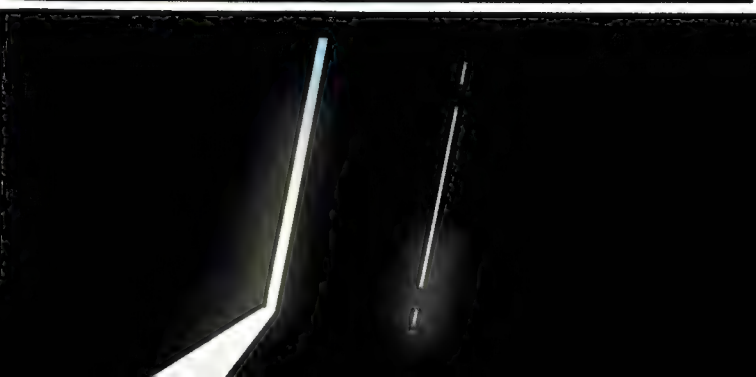
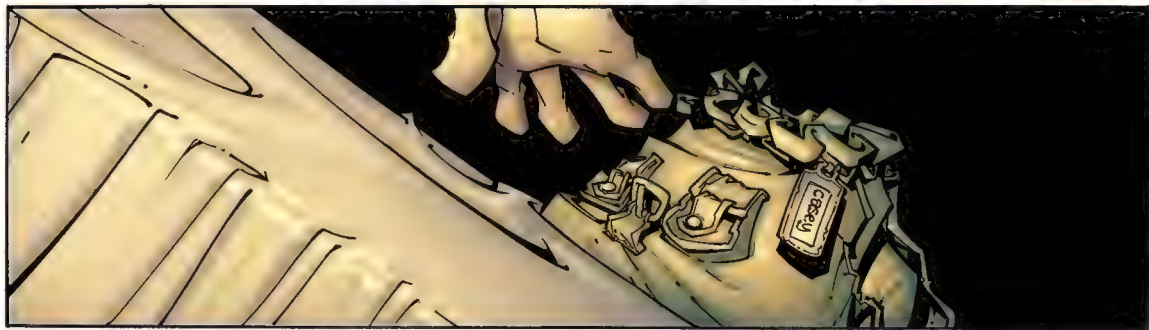
...SOME SOULS CRY OUT
IN LOSS AND GRIEF--EVEN
WITHOUT THE DREAMS.

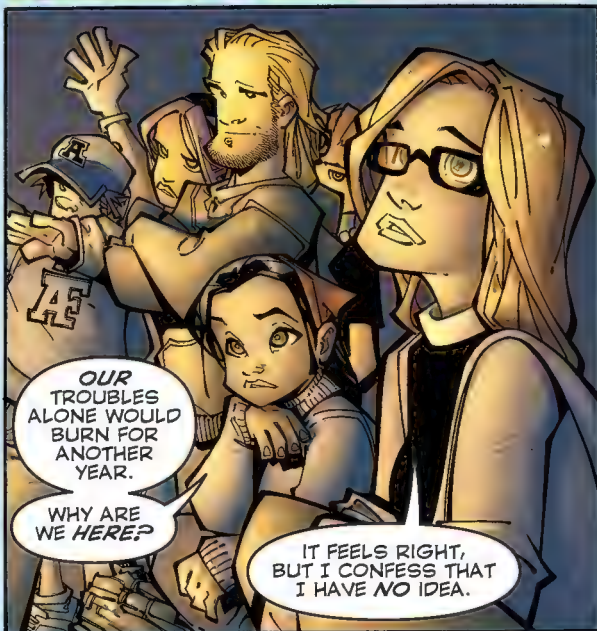
ABEL SIMMS
NEVER SPEAKS.



PERHAPS IT IS THAT HE
DOESN'T REALLY NEED TO.









WHERE'S MARK?

HE WAS
HERE A FEW
MINUTES
AGO...

IT--IT'S MARK...
I THINK HE'S IN
TROUBLE...VERY
BAD TROUBLE.



THIS
DOESN'T FEEL AT
ALL GOOD...

I'M SURE
MARK IS FINE--
RIGHT...?

UNNN...?



HE'S
PROBABLY BACK
AT THE MOTEL.

I HOPE
SO...THIS FEELS
TERRIBLE!



GOING
SOMEWHERE...?

WE THINK
NOT.

MARK WEXLER IS
ON A MISSION.



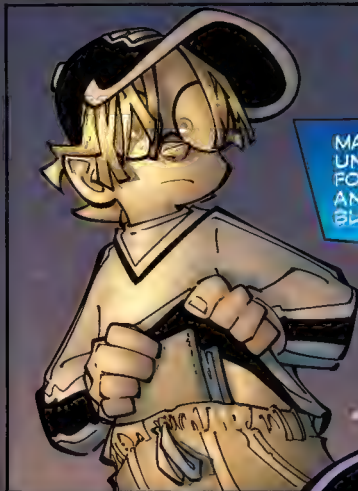
HERE. THIS IS
PERFECT.

MARK INTENDS TO TAKE
ON THE DEVIL HIMSELF...



...AGAIN.

MARK WEXLER IS
UNIQUELY GIFTED
FOR THIS MISSION--
AND DRIVEN BY
BLAZING GRIEF.



ஸு"எடுநாஈஈ ஈ-ஆடுகஈ-ஆ
ஈஸு" தவா"எ லுஎததுஎடுஎடு .".ஈடு
துவா"ஈஸு" றுஈஈகு சு-ஆலுலுஎடு
ஈஈதுதவா"எடுஎடு.

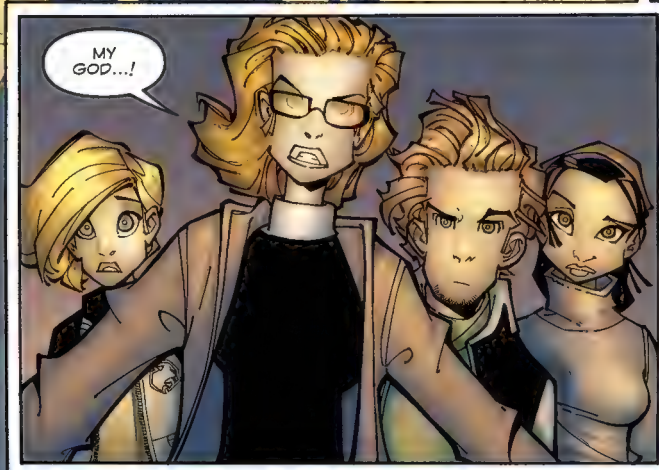


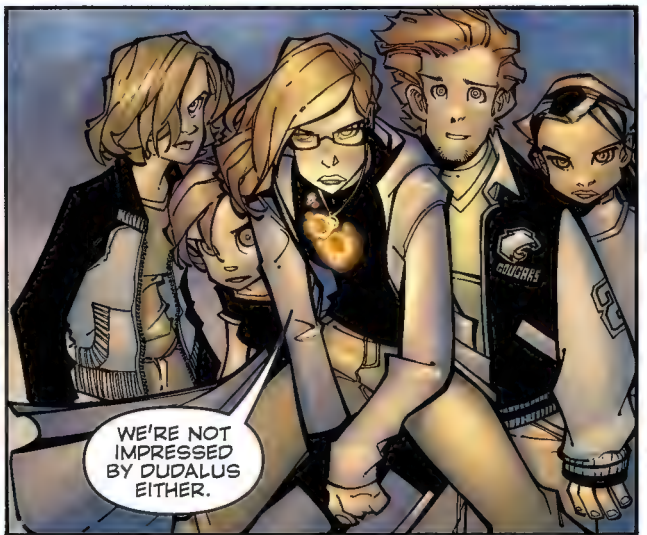
DRAEDALUS!

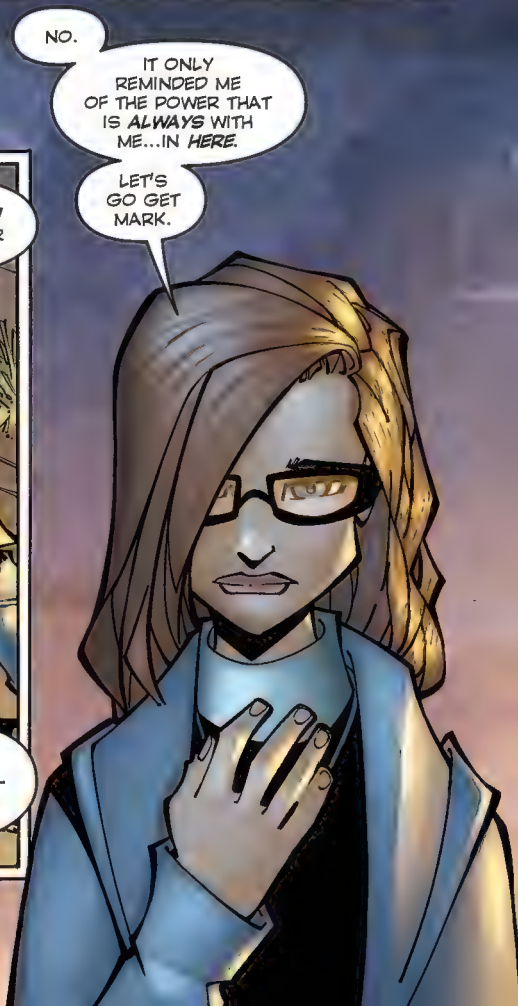
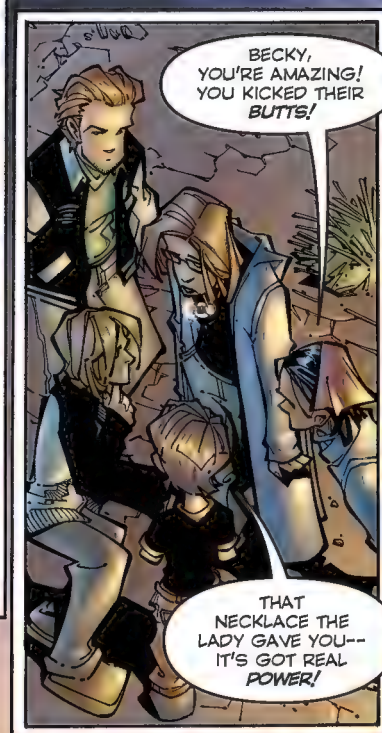


WHO...
SUMMONS THE LORD OF
THE **DRAEDREALM**?!

GIVE IT A
REST, *DARTH*--THE
BAD-GUY ACT DOESN'T
SCARE ME...









I HAVE NO NEED OR REGARD FOR YOUR FATHER...OR ANY OF THE USELESS DREGS OF EL DORADO CITY. I COULD RETURN THEM IN AN EYE-BLINK.

BUT I WILL NOT. EVER.

THE ENTIRE TOWN IS TRAPPED IN THE SULFUR WASTES OF MY REALM--MOST INHOSPITABLE CONFINES. THEY WILL LIKELY DIE HORRIFIC, LINGERING DEATHS. THAT STIRS NOTHING BUT AMUSEMENT WITHIN ME.

I SUMMONED YOU!

YOU HAVE TO GIVE ME WHAT I WANT!

I AM NOT A GENIE. I WILL GIVE YOU NOTHING...

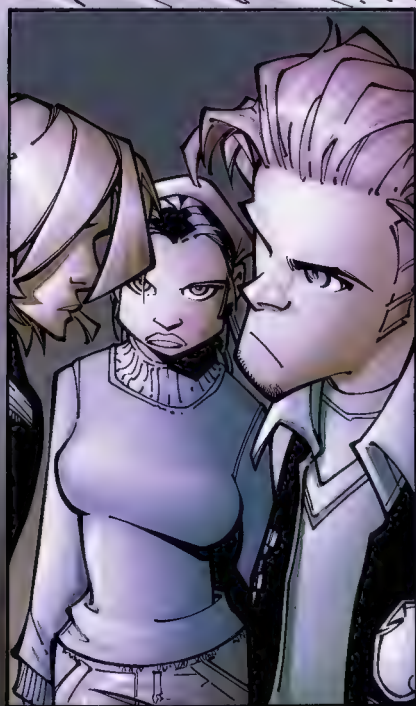
MARK... NO...!

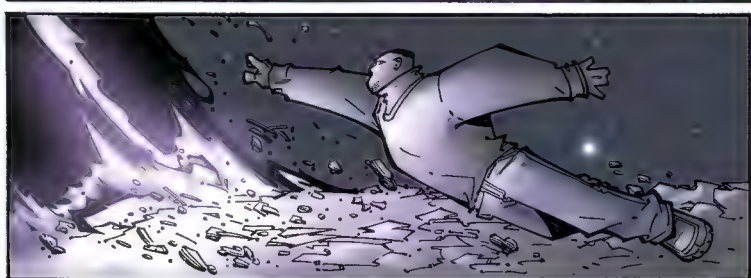
...AND THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT.

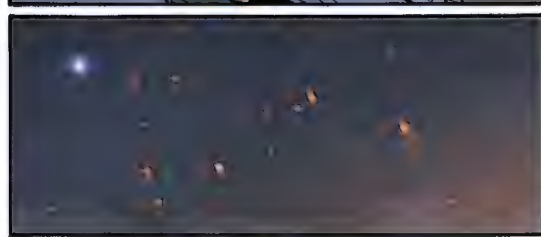
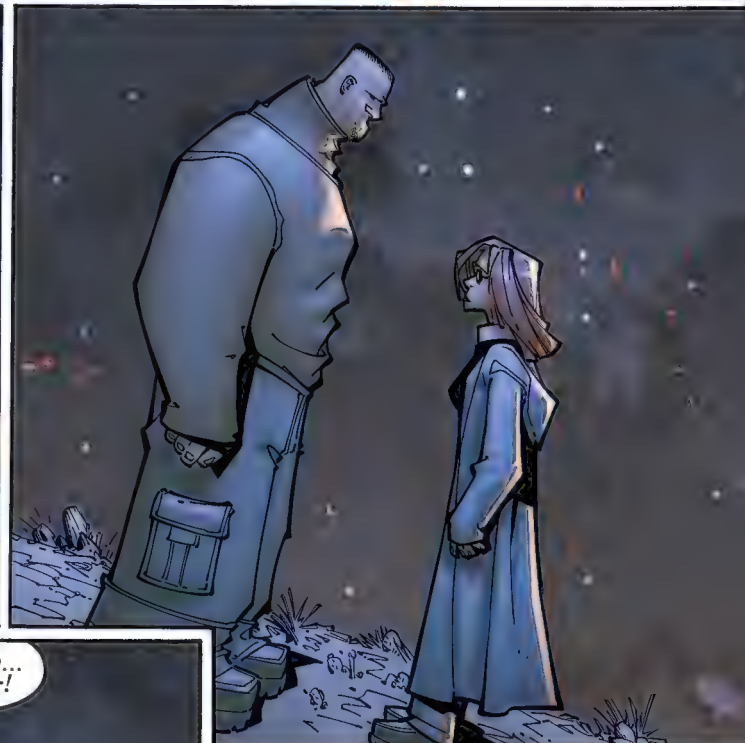
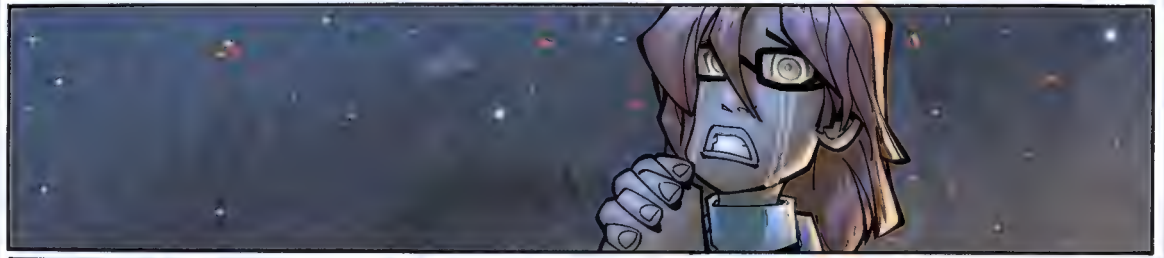
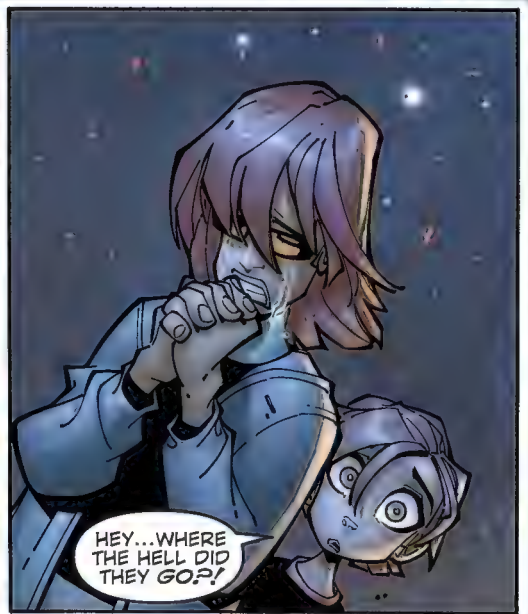
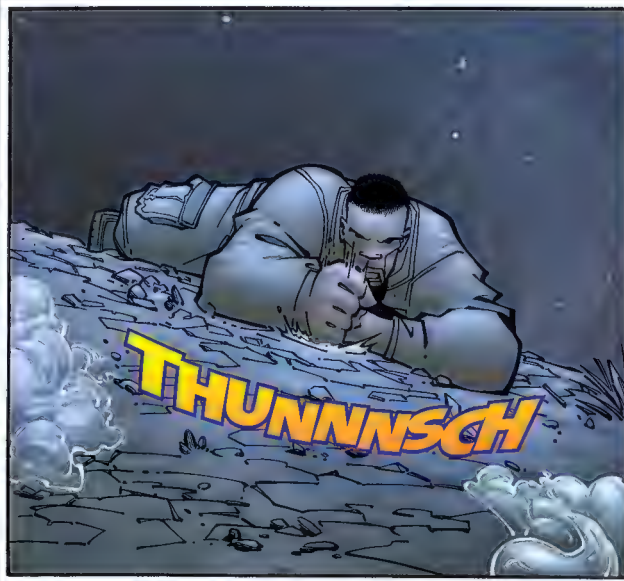
DAMN YOU--!!!

AAARRRRRRGGGGGGHHHH!!





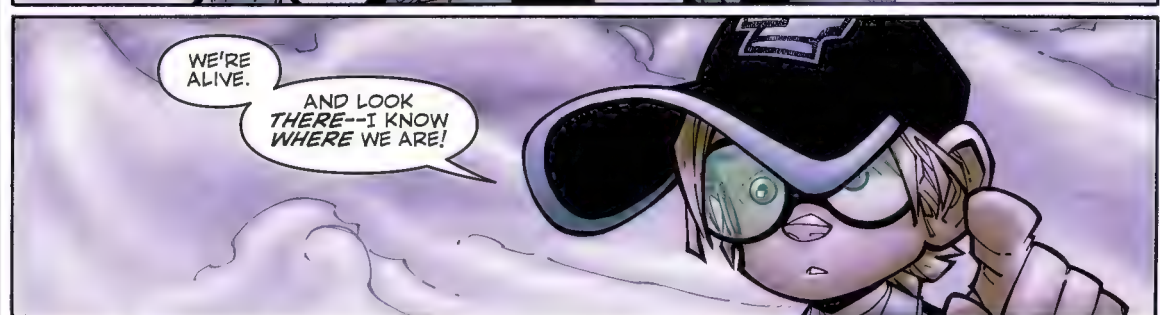
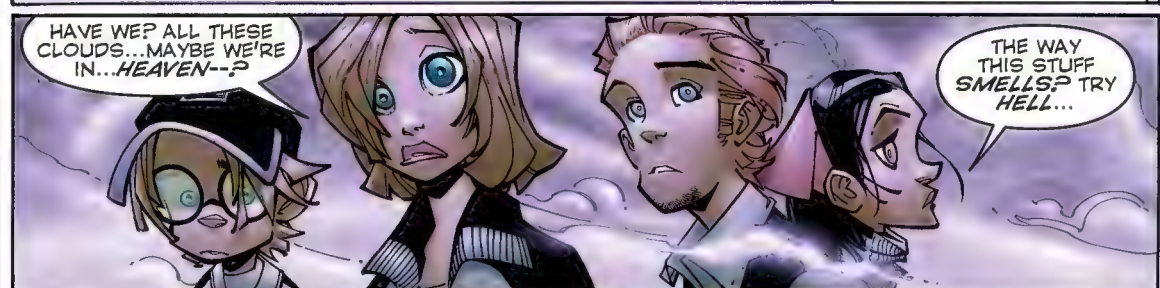




THEIR SOLE WISH HAS ALWAYS
BEEN TO GO HOME AGAIN.



THEY WILL LEARN TO
BE CAREFUL WHAT
THEY WISH FOR.





...I DON'T THINK
WE'RE IN CALIFORNIA
ANYMORE...

BE CAREFUL WHAT
YOU WISH FOR

END BOOK TWO



A stylized, dark-toned illustration of a school bus. The front of the bus features a sign that reads "GRACE CHURCH". The bus is filled with people, including a woman on the left, a group of children in the middle, and a man on the right. The front of the bus has a large grille with the word "INTERNATIONAL" and three horizontal bars. The entire image is set against a dark background.

GRACE CHURCH

**COVER
GALLERY**

INTERNATIONAL













SKETCH GALLERY





Sketchbook

Mark
Wexler
25/01/00

LA NALIZ
MOMMA
SCIA UNA
SOLA PUY

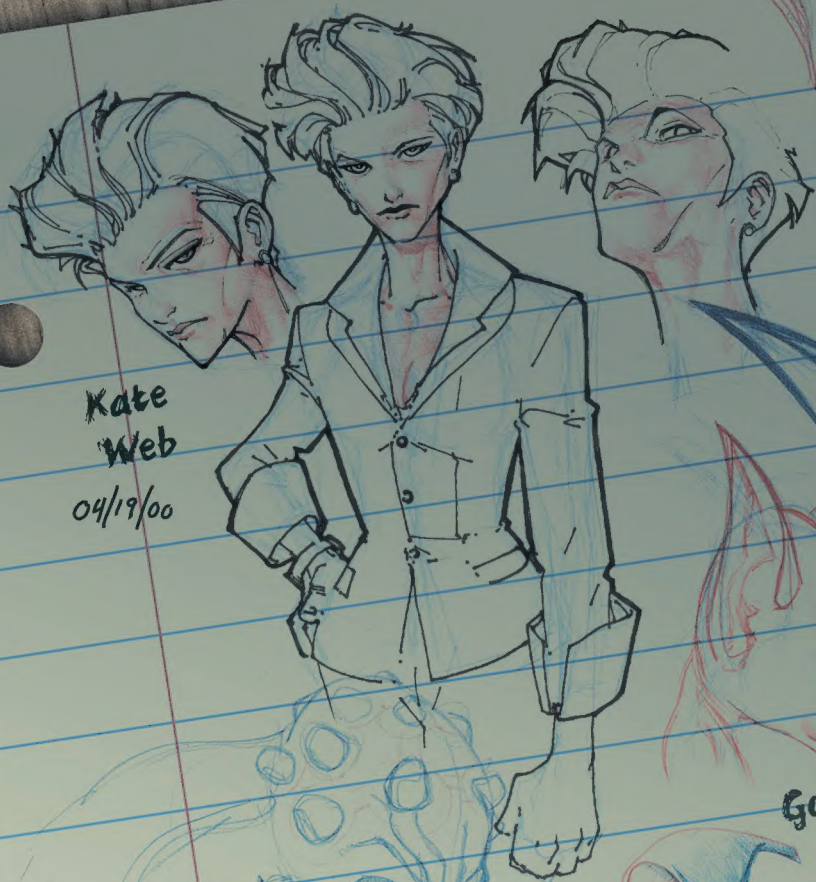
Zach
Mullins
25/01/00

Casey
Phillips
25/01/00

Jessica
Santiago
12/29/99

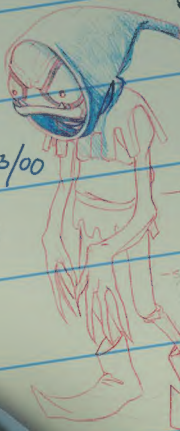
RAMOS

CLIFFHANGER! Pencils



Kate
Web
04/19/00

Goblins
16/10/00



OK FIES
-LIP
-LIP-TEETH
-DASH-

07/03/00

Draedalus
07/03/00



Sharpie

FINE POINT
Series No.

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VOLUME THREE: REUNION



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